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THINGS WORTH KNOWING

ABOUT

HORSES.

BY HARRY HIEOVER,

AUTHOR OF

"PROPER CONDITION OF ALL HORSES;" "HINTS TO HORSEMEN;" "SPORTING FACTS AND SPORTING FANCIES;" "PRECEPT AND PRACTICE," &c. &c.

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THINGS WORTH KNOWING

ABOUT

HORSES.

TRICKS AND BAD HABITS IN HARNESS HORSES.

THERE are many habits horses may have that in no way owe their origin to vice, yet are often as troublesome and sometimes as dangerous as those which do.

I have lately said as much about breaking horses to harness as I consider may be useful to the casual reader to know, and more I suspect than most persons would take the trouble to put in practice. If, however, I give such hints as may enable them to judge whether their horses are being judiciously

treated by others, my time will not have been misspent. I had always a peculiar pride (I must call it) in not being beat by a horse, and candidly allow have often taken more pains to cure a fault or failing than it was worth.

Having said so much about harness horses, I am induced to mention certain habits many horses have that are very annoying. Hugging the pole is one. It greatly annoys the other horse, and he will probably learn to do the same thing, not from imitation, but from leaning inwards so as to enable him the better to stand against the other leaning on him. I have often seen a pair of pieces thus going, each leaning on the other, till they might be figuratively likened to a pair of open compasses. It is extremely dangerous in frosty weather, or where the road or pavement is from any cause slippery. It has the effect of causing the pole horses in descending a hill to draw straight from the pole, by which they are at their full length; whereas, horses going (as they should do) a little wider than on ordinary occasions, somewhat shorten the length by being drawn out a

little diagonally. A further advantage is gained by this; it gives the horses greater power to keep the pole steady, which is quite necessary for safety in going down a steep hill. Hugging the pole may be prevented in a great measure by hitting a horse on the inside shoulder, but this lasts only for a minute; and, again, if a horse is hit severely enough to produce the desired effect, he very probably rushes forwards, thus relaxing the pole-piece, and leaving the entire weight of the descending carriage to be supported by the other horse.

A horse having this vile habit I should strongly recommend others to sell, unless they were disposed to try a plan that I found effectually cure one of my own of the propensity. I drove him at wheel on the off-side; but, whichever side he was put, he "hugged the pole" the same. I had a piece of board, about ten inches in width, screwed to the off-side of the pole. On the off-side of this surface I nailed some strong green furze, clipping it till it did not project more than three inches on the side the horse went. I took care to give him a hole in the pole-piece, the

same with the near side trace, and lengthened his coupling rein ; so he had not occasion to approach the pole thus armed. This being merely a lesson to the horse, I took care to manage the drive so as only to have occasion to turn the carriage to the off-side during the lesson : as usual, he began or attempted hugging the pole, but he started from it as if a tarantula had stung him. I suppose in a few minutes the smarting went off, when he tried the same game, with the same result. I conclude the second application of the furze, acting on the first, produced increased effect, for it was a longer period before he transgressed again ; and before my drive was finished he took especial care not to approach the pole. Though this bid fair as to curing him of a bad habit, I in no way expected a lesson or two would cure him ; but ten days' driving effectually did, and afterwards it was somewhat laughable to see, if he forgot himself, or attempted pole-hugging, with what alacrity he jumped back into his proper place. I certainly found a trifling inconvenience from his subsequent dread of the pole : if I wanted to turn the

carriage to the near side, the other horses, or horse, if only a pair, had to do it; for, save and except by the off-side trace, he would not, so far as the pole went, lend a hand. This was, however, nothing when put in comparison with hugging the pole. Whether in the course of time he forgot the lessons, I know not, but he quite well remembered them during the twelve months I drove him, when I sold the team.

Another very objectionable habit some horses have is the direct opposite to the last-mentioned one: this is, hanging *away* from the pole, especially in going down hill; some horses will practise it to a really alarming extent. Driving one of the Bath coaches, on coming to a hill the coachman warned me "to mind the two wheelers, for they were very awkward." I soon found them so, for they went down the hill hanging away from the pole till their position and bodies could only be figured by the letter "V," the off-side wheeler, as it were, riding on the off trace till we came to level ground. He was a very clever horse, and a very fine goer, probably

sold to a coach for the very fault I have described. From his hanging-off the pole he so lugged it to the off-side, that the near wheeler, in his own defence, was forced to do the same thing to counteract the effect produced by the other horse; hence their both going, as I have said, like the letter V. I thought he would be a good subject to experimentalise upon. I bought him. For his accommodation I had a deal rafter fixed to the splinter bar, this was brought a foot beyond the roller-bolt; then I got another piece, and loosely fastened that to the end of the transverse piece, bringing it like a shaft to the front of the horse's bosom, and fastening it to the harness. Just where his quarters would come if he leaned outwards, I clothed it, as in the other case, with furze. The result was, *mutatis mutandis*, the same; in a few times' driving it cured him. I never had occasion to try the same experiments on other horses, so do not give them as a general mode of curing all horses practising the same annoying habits; but it completely succeeded with the two I have mentioned; and I merely relate the two anec-

dotes to show that a very simple contrivance will often baffle a horse, without any direct violence being used.

Some horses have a habit of (as it is termed) snatching at their traces on first starting. This I have frequently stopped by putting a cavesson on, and fastening an extra rein to the pole. If the horse brings his head to a proper place and goes off quietly, this is no inconvenience to him; but if he bolts suddenly forward, wildly throwing (or attempting to throw up) his head, it gives him a rather unpleasant snatch back, accompanied by a pinch of his nose. A few lessons will, in most cases, check it. With a heavy carriage behind, this fault is not of much consequence, its only effect being possibly the breaking of a trace, unless a very strong one; but in a light vehicle the violent snatch is very unpleasant, and it is quite worth the trouble of curing, or, at least, attempting to cure.

It is frequently found that horses, on receiving any indication to stop, will do so suddenly, creating an unpleasant sensation to those within the carriage.

Old Donnington, the racehorse, did something similar—he knew as well when he had passed the winning-post as did his jockey, and, winning or losing, would, if permitted to do so, stop as if he were shot, and, with a jockey who did not know this propensity, would very likely unseat him. The only way was to threaten him with the whip, and thus keep him going till he stopped gradually like other horses. The horse that does the same thing in harness must be kept up to his collar by feeling the whip till the carriage is smoothly and gradually brought to a stop.

STARTING AND SHYING HORSES.

Persons sometimes place these failings in the same category; but there is a wide distinction between the two, and they are frequently the result of widely different causes. They are both annoying to the rider; and, if carried to a great extent, are often attended with considerable danger to man or horse, or perhaps both—the danger being more or less in accordance with the situations in which both happen to be. For instance, a horse shying in the country matters little—it is, in fact, a mere deviation from the straight line in which he was going; but in London this deviation may possibly bring horse and rider in contact with an omnibus, or one of Pickford's vans. Horses on first being brought to London are very apt to *shy*, but not to *start*, and for this reason: they

meet or pass many things to which they have not been accustomed—they fear, and consequently avoid close contact with them by shying out of the way. The human passenger will pass horses, dogs, sheep, or cattle, in most cases, without alarm or avoidance—he has seen such from his childhood; but, let him or her meet a camel coming, the wayfarer will probably, like the horse, shy away from it. It matters not whether it be an omnibus or a camel, if, from being unaccustomed to meet, either biped or quadruped feel them as objects of alarm.

I have previously remarked that on horses first coming from the country to London they are apt to *shy*, but not to *start*. It will be found to be usually the case: the fact is, the shying prevents their starting. Their attention is so occupied by a continuity of objects at which they shy, that they do not come on any one, as it were, by surprise. If they did, they would *start*. Starting is usually the result of surprise; shying, that of fear.

Now, on the contrary, horses in the country will more frequently start than shy, from there being by

far fewer objects to shy from; and, again, their attention not being engaged, a bird flying from a hedge, a wheelbarrow in a ditch, or a man's hat by the side of or in the road, will frequently cause a start; but this said hat on the London pavement would probably escape their notice, if that notice were occupied by a coming carriage. Even a London horse, who will after a time walk the streets without either shying or starting, would very probably, if ridden up Rotten Row, start at a dropped handkerchief, if it lay in his path. He sees but the one object; it surprises him; and he consequently, probably, starts at it.

I have endeavoured to show the causes of starting and shying, also the difference between the two acts. They arise from his seeing objects that surprise or alarm; but there is a far worse cause for some horses doing either, which frequently is from their *not* seeing those objects—at least, not seeing them clearly. There are far more horses going about London streets with defective eyes "than is dreamt of in our philosophy."

An acquaintance of mine, with whom I was riding, was mounted on a very clever cob; he both started and shied, two or three times; his master, who was an irritable man, laid an ash stick very severely about the cob's ears, saying with an oath, "—— you, I will give you something else to think of than shying;" the poor cob shook his ears at this infliction of severe punishment. Now, I had before this, from seeing him so frequently start and shy from slight cause, and from the peculiar motion of his ears, had my suspicions. "Stop," said I, "allow me to look at your cob's eyes." I did so; and, figuratively speaking, found him to be, in technical phrase, "as blind as a bat." He certainly would not run against a cab, and could find his way into a stable-door; but his sight was so far defective that most things appeared to him, probably, as what they were not; and, as no man can tell what they did appear, it is little wonder the poor brute started.

I hope this true anecdote will act as a hint to my friends and readers. There are many persons who have slightly defective sight, without being aware of

it; depend upon it, many horses have very defective eyes without their owners suspecting anything of the kind. I would recommend every one who has a horse that shies, if he does so at objects not calculated to cause alarm, to have him examined by a veterinary surgeon; he will then either learn the worst, or, if the shying does not proceed from defective vision, he may then take measures to cure him of an objectionable habit, with a fair prospect of success.

I have not the smallest doubt but that horses are affected, like human beings, with sundry variations of vision. I consider the two that are most common are confused and deceptive sight and short sight. As we can neither ask questions of the animal, nor apply glasses to his eyes, to ascertain what kind of defect he labours under, we can only be guided by his acts. Inflammation, or weakness of the eyes is easily seen, so are cataract specks on the eye, and many other ailments; but a horse may and frequently has very imperfect vision without any of these apparent causes. We will suppose it is with a horse thus situated we have at present to do, and I will, to the best of my

ability and experience, state by what symptoms, or rather by what acts, we may generally judge of the state of his vision, which to any one but a scientific professional man may appear from superficial examination to be perfectly good.

If in going along a road we were met by a led bear with a monkey on his back, or a man seated on a velocipede, we find our horse astonished, and then shying or starting from the approach of either, we need not be surprised at his doing so; but if we merely met a man driving a calf before him, and the horse showed evident symptoms of astonishment and alarm, I should strongly suspect there existed *something* defective in his sight that occasioned his alarm at the appearance of such a common object. I do not mean we are to come to this conclusion at once by his doing so; but if he continually shied from objects he must often have met with, or, at least similar ones, the inference I should draw would be that imperfect vision disabled him from seeing what the object was, or that it appeared to him a something that it was not. Such horse may see his way

along a road well enough, and quite answer the purpose of a road horse; but ware the man who would ride him at a fence, for then the secret would out.

I have no doubt many of my readers have found a horse, or seen one, in technical term, "buck" on coming to a (say) large white stone on the road, without its appearing to have attracted his attention till close upon it. I have no hesitation in giving an opinion that a horse in the habit of doing this is near-sighted. If, on the contrary, he cocked his ears and raised his head on seeing the stone at a distance, I should infer his sight was confused, and that the stone was magnified to his view, or appeared what it was not; but the sudden start on seeing it, as it were, under his feet, clearly shows he had not seen it till close on it—then he starts, often producing an almost electric shock to the rider. I have seen a horse thus start so suddenly and violently, as almost to bring himself on his nose. Depend on it, no horse will do this but under the influence of defective vision.

The attempt to cure a failing the result of an in-

firmity must prove abortive, unless we could cure or palliate the original cause of it.

I have already mentioned the different causes that occasioned shying and starting: there is, however, another cause—this is nervousness, which will frequently cause horses to start on hearing any unusual sound or noise; some carry this to such a pitch that, figuratively speaking, we might be led to suppose that Mr. Pine, the celebrated acoustic apparatus maker of the Strand, had applied one of his instruments to the animal's ears, so that sounds unheard by other horses fell with unusual loudness on the tympanum of his ear. Such horses are in many cases extremely dangerous. We can use our own eyes and judgment if we see anything approaching likely to cause the horse alarm; but a gun fired off, a drum struck, or a simultaneous shout often takes place without our having notice of its vicinity, consequently we have no notice to enable us to guard against its effects. In all situations a nervous horse is more or less dangerous.

One bit of advice I unhesitatingly give: *never, under*

any circumstance, strike a horse for starting or shying. If he does so from imperfect vision or timidity, a moment's reflection must show any man the folly, and, in fact, cruelty of doing so. If it arises from habit, it will not prevent the sudden act, but will occasion such agitation on the part of the animal as will cause him to become so unruly through fear, that the rider will have great trouble to pacify or reassure him. I have seen many a horse who had been punished for starting or shying, start off before the rider was aware of the intent, or jump and throw himself about so violently as to render it difficult to remain on his back—a sure indication of his having been ridden by a bad, or at least hasty-tempered man, and one whom we could not compliment on his judgment.

There is a most mistaken measure people often practise with horses, which is—if a horse shies at any thing stationary, to force him up to it. I have seen an ignorant groom thus battle with a horse till he drove the animal almost to desperation; and, even if such practice succeeds so far as getting the horse

up to it, what is gained by it? It will be found that, so far from being reconciled, and his fears removed, as regards the object of his alarm, he will, the moment he is permitted to do so, retreat from it with increased fear, from the fact of its having been made to him what his fears suggested, namely, an object likely to produce hurt and annoyance to him. He will again shy from it or its similitude.

A horse seldom shies in passing an object without giving some hint that it is probable he will do so. The moment we find this to be the case the wisest plan is to stop him, and, while we encourage him, let him stand and gaze at it. Finding it not attempt to harm him, and that he is encouraged, he becomes collected and reassured. He at first, probably, snorts —then timidly or mistrustfully regards it—then sees it without alarm—and, lastly, quietly walks up to it on the slightest indication of the rider's wish that he should do so. If, on approaching it, he stops, let him do so, and have his stare out. He then, most probably, will go up to it. Let him stand some time; for, if you turn him away either quickly or before he

has become quite in confidence with the object, your work is only half done. Do not let him leave it till you are convinced he will do so as composedly as he quitted his own stable-door.

It may be said, Are we all our lives to be thus tampering with and coaxing a faulty horse? By no means; but, faulty as he is, the usual or common mode of treating him will make him worse every day he is thus treated. By the mode I advise he will, from being encouraged instead of brow-beaten, gain confidence in his rider; and, finding that on submitting to his wishes as regards approaching objects that he beheld with alarm, he only meets with encouragement from him, and no harm from the object, he will in a short time feel his rider as a guarantee that no injury will arise from compliance with his wishes. I do not mean to say that courage is to be absolutely taught even man; but daily intercourse and companionship with a manly and fearless companion will go a long way towards rendering one nervous and timid bold and enterprising. So custom and encouragement will render an animal, if not by nature

a high-couraged one, at least sufficiently fearless to answer most purposes required of him.

Starting and shying in harness is a serious failing in a horse. I once saw the shafts of a light gig both snapped by the sudden violent start of one, and a sad catastrophe was the consequence. In a phaeton such a horse is very likely to upset it, unless it locked under; but even then the alarm and confusion it creates is great. In any sort of light vehicle it is attended more or less with danger. Horses will start or shy in various ways: some seem only to fear (or, in sooth, perhaps see) objects above the usual range of sight—for instance, an omnibus, load of hay, or a wild-beast caravan; others shy at objects on a level with the eye; and, again, others from objects on the ground. Though with judicious treatment we may cure or palliate the failing of shying in a horse ridden, I am not aware of any means by which we can accomplish the same with a harness horse; probably, if cured of it when under the saddle, he might not practise it when in harness; but, never having tried the experiment, I am unable to decide the

point. However, supposing a horse thus to start or shy, as we cannot make him familiar with objects, our only resource is to prevent his seeing them; this is only to be effected by the winkers. In some cases, where this is not sufficient, we must shut them from his sight by a piece of leather attached to the winkers. If he starts at elevated objects, the shade or blinker must be fixed so as to prevent his range of sight reaching upwards. If he shies at objects near at hand and below him, the additional blinker must be fixed so that he cannot see objects beneath him. If he shies at things on a level with his eyes, the extra blinker must be fixed from one winker to the other, so that he can only see the sky and the ground close to his feet.

Horses will frequently shy from the winkers being too small, or the bridle carelessly adjusted: when both these causes have occurred I have frequently from a coach-box actually seen a horse's eyes from over the winker—this arises from the winkers, from a supposed smartness of shape, being cut too far away on the top part; added to this, if the side pieces of

the bridle are not tight enough, and the nose-band is left too loose, the cheek or side pieces of the bridle will at times admit the winkers to stand away from the horse's eyes, and he sees above, below, or behind him, as the case may be. There can be no doubt but that most horses might be used to go in harness without winkers as steadily as with them; but from our not being accustomed to see them thus harnessed we should think it unsightly, and, moreover, they would be constantly watching the whip; so a free-going horse would be kept in a constant fret by every motion of it, as horses frequently are when they watch its shadow on a sunshiny day.

But be it borne in mind that a horse without winkers would be a very different case from a horse with them, and at times getting glimpses of objects from a momentary circumstance, which probably would be attended with danger.

TROTTING HORSES.

It is perfectly well known to most persons, however little conversant they may be with the habits and attributes of quadrupeds, that there are four paces natural to the horse, viz., the walk, the trot, the canter, and the gallop. These are more or less practised at times by every description of horse—be he the Flying Dutchman, one of Messrs. Meux's dray horses, the minute shelty in his northern climate, or the light and enduring Arab in his arid desert, though each pace is more or less natural and practised by the breed the animal belongs to, and the habits to which he is accustomed. We have a fifth pace, taught to and practised by the Mexican and other horses of South America; this is the rack or amble, for I believe I am correct in stating this fifth pace to be

chiefly a taught one. Unquestionably, some horses practise it naturally: whether they inherit it from sires or dams I am not prepared to say; but even be it so, the origin of the pace was the effect of tuition. It would appear a most unsightly pace to eyes unaccustomed to see it; yet I am informed by those who have sojourned in countries where it is practised that it is a safe and expeditious mode of progression, by no means fatiguing to the horses and mules that practise it, and is pleasant enough to the rider when used to it. This may be, and doubtless is, true enough; true it is, also, that the giraffe, from his peculiar formation, finds it a convenient pace; but gods of the chase forefend we should ever see it practised by a Leicestershire hunter! Fancy the Marquis of Waterford or the celebrated Capt. Ross ambling up to Ashby Pasture, or West Australian up to the starting-post!

There can be no doubt but that any pace or evolution, save the four legitimate ones, have been taught the horse either on the road or in the riding-school. The tuition of the latter place, when it amounts

to all the unnatural exploits formerly forced on the horse's performance, has for a long time been very wisely and properly discontinued as useless, and the *manége* horse is no longer in use. Such men as Sir Sydney Meadows and Lord Rivers had an unquestionable right to amuse themselves as they liked. They might teach their horses all the riding-school tricks (for the evolutions there taught were nothing more); but were we to see them practised now in Hyde Park, we should look for the three-cornered cocked hat, the pigtail and powder, worn in the days of the *manége* by the riders.

Speed in either the walk or trot is the result of practice. Cavil not, reader, at the term speed as allusive to the walk, for accelerated pace is in other terms speed. This speed is far more acquired by practice as regards the walk and trot than the gallop. The speed of any horse who has naturally good trotting action may be more or less improved, that is, quickened by practice. The horse, for instance, that can trot at the rate of thirteen or fourteen miles an hour may, in most cases, be brought or taught to

rate seventeen or eighteen. We do not find it thus as regards the gallop, particularly with thoroughbred ones. The two-year-old colt that does not exhibit a turn of speed at that age rarely becomes anything remarkable at three or four. There are certainly exceptions, such as overgrown size producing weakness in the very young horse, or diminutive size preventing that stride the usual accompaniment of great speed: either of these drawbacks a year may remedy; and hence the reason we sometimes find influence the performance of horses at different ages. But in the trotter it is otherwise; in the generality of cases we are pretty sure of our attempts to increase speed being more or less crowned by success. Be it remembered that the horse never voluntarily exerts his top speed in *any pace*. We will say his natural rate of walking, either in approaching or receding from any object or place, is at least not more than three miles an hour; if he has occasion to move faster, he does not exert himself by increased pace in his walk, but he breaks into a slow or moderate trot; if fear or any other impulse urge

him to increased quickness of motion, he does not much increase the rate of the trot, but he gallops, which pace at a very moderate rate quite suffices for any of his usual natural wants or desires. This satisfies us, if any proof were wanting, that top speed at any pace is found by the animal to be distressing; and nothing but fear, coercion, or practice causes him to use it.

To bring the matter home to ourselves, and to teach a person the distressing effects of forced speed by a trial of it in his own person—there are few men in the habit of daily exercise and in moderate wind who could not, if called upon, run half a mile at a rate bordering on seven miles an hour, nor can we suppose, unless under the influence of some defect in the respiratory organs, that he would feel distress from the run; but oblige the same man to attempt to walk half a mile at the rate of only five miles and a half per hour, the chances are, if he really walked at a rate to perform the task, he would give in long before that task was completed. The fact would be, he had in the latter case been walking at (to him) an

unnatural pace, whereas in the former he had (though the pace was quicker) only gone that pace at a rate we may suppose he had, for longer or shorter distances, often gone before.

We read of, and may see, horses capable of doing their mile in two minutes and about forty seconds; some have shown themselves faster than that by some few seconds; you may be quite sure it was not mere nature brought them to such speed. Doubtless many colts are born trotters, mostly inheriting the peculiarity from their sire; they are born with the attributes of the trotter about them; but, though thus naturally fast (we will say uncommonly fast), it is tuition and practice that bring them to perform the astonishing speed we know is shown by many. Practice will also increase the lasting qualities to a certain extent in this way; horses acquire by practice the least distressing manner of going at a given rate; and of course, with the less exertion a horse can perform a pace, the longer he will be enabled to continue it; of course, constitution, stamina, and resolution, or, in more technical term, "game," bring the horse

through in any such feats. We teach him the best way of doing them; nature ordains to what length he may continue them.

Trotters, like racehorses, have their distances: some go a mile at a terrific pace, then their "bolt is shot;" others can keep up their speed three or four miles, others seven; while Tom Thumb and some others could do twenty, and that at about the rate of a mile in three minutes. I will bring an instance. The black mare I purchased for the late ever-to-be-lamented Duke of Gordon, and who beat the celebrated Birmingham mare, could do her mile with comparative ease in three minutes; but she could not do even a single mile five seconds under that time, for I tried her more than once; yet this mare did her three miles in nine minutes some little time before I bought her. I have reason to suspect, though I never tried her, she could not have done ten miles in anything like half an hour.

In some proof that I am not far astray in my remark, that practice goes far towards making trotters, let any man old enough call to mind what he saw

thirty years since, and what he sees now; but for reflection, he might infer we had got into a breed of trotters: not a bit, the fact is simply this—our roads have become so good, that each horse drawing a light cart is now more or less practised as a trotter, and the effect of that practice may be daily seen in our streets; the horses of thirty years since were as well bred as they are now, and had the capabilities of trotting just the same, but pavement and roads prevented the pace, and consequently the practice.

I have previously stated that when called upon to exhibit great speed in his trot the horse could not do so without very considerable distress. I fear readers not very conversant with such matters may be led into error by what I have said, and conclude I mean to infer that the trot is a fatiguing pace. It is quite the contrary—it is the easiest next to a slow walk, and one far more commonly used by horses at liberty than the canter or gallop. I have no hesitation in saying a horse will trot along with a man on him, eight miles an hour, with far greater ease than he would canter seven; for, in the trot, each limb does

its fair proportion of work, each limb relieves the other in quicker succession than in the canter, and we avoid that bane to the horse I shall allude to in my article on "Horses Leading with One Leg only," throwing unfair stress on the supporting limb. In saying that a very fast trot is distressing, I allude to the forced speed, but in no way to the pace itself.

There can be no doubt but that a horse intended for a regular trotter (that is, a wager trotter) should never be permitted to canter or gallop; it is to be wished he did not know himself capable of either pace—in fact, very first-rate trotters rarely rise (as it is technically termed) when at full speed. I doubt their being able at that moment to change the pace. A regular trotter will bear the whip (like the racehorse) without "breaking" or "rising;" it is when in distress, rating fifteen or sixteen miles an hour, that they do this—not during the time they are doing twenty. I have ridden several of our first-rate trotters in my time, and, as some proof of the truth of what I say, as respects their not rising in their trot, will bring an instance.

As quite a boy I was put on the celebrated old Phenomenon mare. Her owner, among other remarks, affirmed she could trot faster than she could gallop. To prove this to my father and a friend or two who had come to see her, I was directed to trot her up the road, and in coming back to force her into a gallop (which I could not have done without instructions). I was then told to strike her while galloping with the whip. All this I steadily did; and sure enough, on the second or third stroke, she resumed her trot, and came back at a rate of something like twenty miles an hour, certainly far faster than she galloped.

We all know that the common run of horses if out-paced will break out into a gallop; this arises from want of tuition, and much more frequently from their riders not being accustomed to ride regular trotters. Few ordinary horses pull hard enough against their rider or driver to perform extraordinary speed, and few riders or drivers are willing that they should do so; yet unless they do they will rarely be found trotters. I in no shape mean that a horse to

be fast in or out of harness must necessarily be a puller. He may be what in common estimation is held as fast, that is, he may be able to rate his fifteen miles an hour (and this is fast); but when you come to add four or five miles per hour to this, it is a very different affair. Horses capable of this are rarely pleasant to ride or drive. Tom Thumb would pull against a snaffle-bit like a locomotive; put a severe curb in his mouth, and, comparatively, he would not go at all. The well-known Birmingham mare had a way of so determinately throwing down her head, that a man unaccustomed to her habit would be fairly or unfairly pulled out of his saddle; yet it would not do to violently check her—she would have been "all abroad" in a minute. I had one who could do his nine miles in thirty minutes; he, when trotting at the rate of twelve or fourteen miles an hour, would go as pleasantly as any horse; put him to his extreme speed, and then be careful that your arms were firm in their sockets; release your hold of him. and he would drop off into ordinary fast pace. He had another peculiarity; he was apt in his first

trotting days to "rise" or break; he had so often been sharply turned round for this, that when I had him, if he did rise he was so conscious of the fault, that, without any effort on the part of the rider, he would turn, as if on a pivot, and a stranger to his ways would inevitably be thrown from his saddle on the opposite side. Some trotters are extremely unpleasant (I might say unsafe) in their slow pace—they seem, in technical phrase, not to get on their legs till they go at a certain rate; while a very very few are pleasant at any rate of going. The black mare I mentioned as my having bought for the Duke of Gordon was one; she was pleasant whether going seven miles an hour or at the rate of twenty, and, more extraordinary still, rode to a good mouth whatever pace she was going at. But "one swallow does not make a summer."

I consider it may be acceptable to some of my readers, if I mention some facts as regards practising and training trotters. We will conclude no man would be insane enough to attempt making a trotter of an animal that exhibited no trotting qualifications;

we may increase speed, but we cannot give the powers of it where none exist; but supposing such do to a certain degree exist, we may, probably, considerably increase the horse's natural speed by practice; but it by no means invariably follows that a horse who can rate sixteen miles per hour, can be brought to rate twenty, or even eighteen, while others train on wonderfully. The natural powers of some horses enable them to go a certain pace; but all the training in the world, though it may improve, cannot make them perform anything very extraordinary. And this cannot be ascertained without giving the not-to-be-improved horse the same chance as the one who may be found to realize all our expectations from practice and training. It will be found that very high or, in fashionable technical terms (among dealers), "extravagant action" greatly impedes speed; a horse with such action may be *fast*, but he will rarely be found *extraordinary*. The only one I ever knew who was so, and at the same time had remarkably high action, was Mr. Osbaldeston's Rattler; but even he would, doubtless, have been faster had

his action been less elevated, and certainly would have performed his work with far less fatigue to himself.

The training horses to trot and the training of the racehorse is a very different affair: it is not that the pace is different only, but the system differs. The trotter in training is very frequently put to his top-speed, and even continued at it so long as it is held judicious that he should be, that is, so long as he can stay at it without bringing on distress; he is, in fact, constantly practised to go at this pace, and he is found to increase in speed from practice. The racehorse is not practised to go at his best speed; in fact, unless in a trial, from the time the racehorse is put in training till he comes to the post, he has perhaps never once been at his top speed, unless, as I have remarked, in the case of trials. What the effect would be of practising horses for a short spurt at speed like the trotter, I do not pretend to give an opinion upon, though I have one; but a system so new as this would be is not to be even commented upon by me. But, as speed is improved in the trotter by being

practised at it, the idea is not absolutely absurd that accustoming a horse to extend himself might be attended with beneficial results. One thing is quite certain: unless there are strong indications of going in the trotter or the racehorse, it is quite useless to train either.

The training of the trotter differs from that of the racehorse in more particulars than I have as yet mentioned. It is quite true that trotting at the rate of, say eighteen miles per hour, involves far greater exertion, and consequent fatigue, than galloping at an increased rate, and requires the wind to be clear to accomplish it; but it does not require that acme of perfection which is necessary to the racehorse, to finish a race probably at a speed verging on sixty miles an hour—a rate I doubt not many do go for a short distance to the finish. Fatigue or exertion has a different effect on the lungs in velocity, and though we may not find the racehorse, on being pulled up, blow harder than a horse after a severe trot, it is the perfection his wind is brought to, that occasions it.

Severe as is the training of a racehorse towards its conclusion, I should say that of the trotter is more so. A trainer may find it quite necessary to (in technical terms) "get the length into" the racehorse; but what is that length?—happily for horses, now seldom more than two miles; but even in days when four miles was a common distance, what is that to the trotter, who is to be prepared to trot for an hour, and make the most ground he can in that space of time? The length must be "got into" him as much as the racehorse, and an appalling length it is, be it borne in mind, for horses not thorough-bred. I knew one who was nearly so—this was the late Colonel Copland's Tam o'Shanter. Well as I knew Copland, I never saw the horse at top speed; but his master told me he had done his mile in two minutes forty seconds. I will not vouch for my being correct, but I have an idea that the mare who trotted in the match with Mr. Osbaldeston's Rattler was thorough-bred; but the generality of trotters are very far from being so, some of them barely half-bred, which proves that up to a certain rate of

going half-breds can do wonders; go beyond that and for a distance, nothing but thorough-breds can live at it.

To get pace and length is, of course, the great desideratum with all horses, though we may think ourselves fortunate if we get a horse that is extraordinary in either qualification: to get one that combines both is a circumstance "devoutly to be wished;" and occasionally we get it. This holds good equally as regards the racehorse as the trotter. Now to practise the latter in both speed and length, with the least possible *useless* expenditure of the horse's powers, is, in fact, the acme of training. Our Transatlantic neighbours, who, let us think as we may, know quite as much about horses as we do (and, in sooth, on many other matters a great deal more), have a way of practising their trotters so as to further the great desideratum I have mentioned; they practise them without a rider; the horse is, in fact driven with long reins by a man on horseback behind him; this man's horse gallops or trots, as best suits him and his rider; for provided he goes a

given rate, it matters not how he goes. It has another advantage—it accustoms the trotter not to be disturbed by the clattering of a horse behind him, which frequently alone is sufficient to cause many a hasty-tempered horse to "rise," and further, does away with any reluctance a horse may have to (in technical terms) "leave his horses;" such peculiarity is, I admit, rare, but it does sometimes occur.

I had one, a stallion, good hunter as need be, had always passed as a half-bred; it was few horses he could not run up to; but there he would stick, and all the hustling, threatening, or whipping, could not get the villain to go in front; he had lost two or three country stakes in this manner. I entered him for a hunters' stake, and rode him. He went manfully up to the leading horse, and I knew perfectly well all the whipcord or spur persuasion in the world would be of no avail, so I sat quietly on him till about two or three lengths from the winning-post; then a couple of sudden strokes of the whip, which might have been heard at the distance, so electrified

him, that he made, I may call it, an exertion of astonishment that landed him a half-head in front; twenty yards further, the rogue would have died away, and run as usual.

There is, no doubt, a different style of going in trotters, but by no means or in any degree so different as is found in the ordinary horse. Let us look at professional pedestrians, to whom I have paid no little attention. Let me see a man start and go ten yards, I could tell in a moment whether he is a runner or walker—they go no more like common men than a Derby horse goes like a charger. The practised trotter goes as a horse (if I may use the term), professionally, like the man; there is a peculiar snatch (I can use no other term) up of the legs as if they were influenced by internal wires, a kind of motion that appears involuntary. We may admire the way in which an ordinary horse lifts or handles his legs, but the trotter, once set in motion, seems as if some spring acted on his limbs, that without any effort on his own part caused the peculiar action to which I allude—the chief difficulty

being to detect the moment they are on the ground: in other words, they appear to be going on an India-rubber surface, that would return each leg to its elevation, without any seeming effort on the part of the animal. There is a certain springiness indispensable to the man if he would become a walker, runner, or vaulter; the same is required to enable the horse to become a trotter, jumper, or racehorse; a good deal of this is to be acquired by practice, but where it is absolutely wanting all practice is thrown away.

A horse may be an excellent harness-horse and tolerably fast into the bargain—the quickness of his step will enable him to do this; but mere quickness will never suffice to make a regular trotter, though it will make an excellent hack, and is precisely what we want in the latter animal. Tiger, the celebrated hack that used to carry George the Fourth when Prince of Wales, in a way that few others could have done, was a good goer, *as a hack*, and fast, but he was no *trotter:* had he been, most probably he could not have carried his royal master

as he did, and *certes* the Prince would not have ridden him if he could have done so.

Those not conversant with trotters are in no shape aware of the bounds they make. Persons look at the horse's legs, and by their quick successive strokes are quite aware the horse is going fast. They may see at the same time some other going at the rate of fifteen miles an hour, who appears (or rather would appear if seen singly) to be going quite as fast perhaps; he moves his legs faster even than the trotter; but it is the space the latter covers while all legs are off the ground that carries him along at the wonderful rate some of them can go. The hack clears little more ground at each step than, like an ordinary man walking, he can as it were stride, be it more or less. If, for instance, in leaping, a horse only took the space he could compass between his fore and hind legs at their utmost stretch, perhaps a dozen feet would be all he could cover, but the impetus and spring of the flying leap carries him on sixteen feet while in the air. I hope this will in some measure explain the vast difference

between the quick going of the best hack, and the bounding movement of the trotter.

At some future time we will turn our attention to the style of going of road horses, as regards pleasure and safety to the rider.

HORSES LEADING WITH THE OFF LEG ONLY.

Among many absurdities in daily use is the practice of teaching horses to lead with the off leg *only* in their gallop; a still greater one is the not permitting them to change it when inclined to do so. It may be urged that from custom we should hold unsightly the seeing a horse leading with the near leg. Let us use our common sense in considering this. We consider the latter act as unsightly. Why it is so held is merely beeause we are unaccustomed to it; so we diminish the facility of the horse's going, and impede his powers, merely to please our fancy—for it is but fancy after all. A horse can go as handsomely, as smoothly, and as fast, leading with one leg as the other. What should we say of a dancer

or danseuse who always kept advancing the right leg? yet, if such was the custom, I suppose we should consider the using either alternately as unsightly.

We all know that the supporting leg—which, I need scarcely say, is the reverse of the leading one—sustains a far greater weight than does the latter; hence why a horse lame on one leg only, invariably leads, if permitted to do so, with the ailing one. Having established this fact, how great must be the folly of confining the animal to go in such form as causes the one leg, whenever or while he gallops, to perform twice the labour of the other. I have not the smallest doubt but that many horses fall from the sustaining leg having become wearied by constantly performing an undue portion of the work. A man carrying a weight on his shoulder shifts that weight to ease the wearied part. A horse cannot do this; but he can bring the less-tired limb to its support. It is absolute tyranny to prevent his doing this. All horses should be taught to do so readily whenever obstacles, turns, fatigue, or any other

casualty renders such act necessary to his own comfort, convenience, or safety, and consequently to the safety of his rider also. A horse should be as handy with his legs as a man is with his hands and arms: and well it would be for the latter if he was as effective with the one as with the other, which using both in similar acts from childhood would make him.

Let us now consider what could originally have been the cause of teaching horses this one mode of going. Persons will perhaps say, a horse leading with the near leg "throws me out of my seat." Your pardon, sir; say "it throws me out of the way I have been accustomed to sit on my saddle." Many persons, in cantering or galloping their horse, lean ridiculously towards the near side. Jockeys of former days were very apt to do this, they thought it stylish to do so—they now do no such thing. The leading leg will incline the body in the right direction, be it which it may, without the rider out-Heroding Herod by twisting his body into an unseemly position. I have heard persons say they leant their body on one side of the horse's neck, that in case of his throwing

up his head he might not strike their own: now, without meaning any offence, I am quite aware that in such case the rider's would prove the softest of the two; but I usually found my hands were sufficient guard to the safety of my head, without playing bo-peep by dodging on either side of my horse's neck. The fact is, we do everything as regards horses on one side, consequently (save the unintentional pun), we do many things in a one-sided manner. We accustom ourselves to do everything on the near side; we harness, saddle, mount, and approach a horse always on the near side; he is taught to confine himself to the off side of his stall, to admit our approach on the near one. The only thing I know of that is done on the other is, that dealers always bleed their horses on the off side, knowing the mark, if any remains, will not be seen by the purchaser, who they well know will look at the horse on the near one. If we show a horse to a person, we place him so as to be looked at on the near side; and if we afterwards mount him, we naturally look towards that person: a horse inclining his neck and head to

the near side, and leading with the off leg, enables the rider to conveniently look at the person. So the horse is made to go so as to facilitate this; probably this first introduced the leading with the off leg, and custom has rendered it imperative that he is to do so.

All this one-sided system is attended with many inconveniences; a horse always accustomed to be approached in the stable on the near side is absolutely astonished, sometimes alarmed, on being approached on the other, even supposing he stands in his stall so as to enable you to do so. He would fly away from a set of harness or a saddle, if attempted to be put on the other. I admit it would be very unstablemanlike to do this, but it would be consistent with reason. We mount a horse invariably on the near side; the rational thing would be to accustom ourselves to mount, and the horse to be mounted, on whichever side we might happen to be.

But to return to horses leading invariably with the off leg, I am not aware that the facility of taking a

fence is impeded or the reverse by either leg leading at the time of taking off. The only thing that possibly may make a difference is this; we use horses so constantly to go in one form, that it seems not improbable that a horse going up to a fence with the near leg leading may find a little awkwardness from the change in his form of going. My correspondent Spectacles, it appears, like a sensible man, permits his hunters to lead with either leg; so, as he says, he finds them equally handy with either, and finds the advantage of doing so in their taking their fences without hesitation, whichever leg they happen to be leading with—another proof that hunters should be accustomed to lead with either.

Spectacles' remark, that horses more frequently change the leading leg on landing than on taking off, is quite correct. In the first place, horses are frequently ridden to fences at a pace that renders the changing the leg inconvenient if not impossible. Now, on landing, the horse comes to a momentary pause; this gives him the opportunity of relieving the leg probably wearied by exertion, and he does so,

for be it borne in mind the sustaining leg is always the most wearied one. As a horse would indubitably go longer if permitted to change the leading leg, so he would unquestionably go faster; for it is self-evident that whatever relieves weariness affords means of exerting speed for the time being.

I know not what others may have found to be the case, though I can give a guess at it, and not a very shrewd one either; but I know that on some of the best of horses I have been often glad to let them go as most convenient to themselves, quite satisfied if, with all the nursing and judgment it was in my power to afford them, they brought me in time enough to hear the final whoo-whoop.

We may start a horse up the ride in Rotten Row in such form as custom holds to be the most becoming, but after twenty-five minutes from (say) Kirby Gate, he is not a bad one that is seen going comparatively fresh, even though he may be leading with what is termed the wrong leg.

SAFETY OF PACE.

I AM not aware that we can in general estimation hold one pace of the horse as more safe, or the reverse, than another. It all depends on the way in which the animal does that pace. Some horses are perfectly safe in all their slow paces; others more or less so as regards a particular one; and, again, others are safe in no pace but a fast one. Some persons might recoil at the idea of putting a naturally unsafe horse to a fast pace, and cannot but annex an added dread of coming down to a very fast rate of going. I admit there is cause for apprehension in such case, and, to exemplify it, will borrow an idea from the coachman, speaking as allusive to the consequences of an overthrow of a coach. Compared with a similar occurrence on a railroad, it

holds good as to horses and the difference of pace. If a horse comes down in his walk, "Why, there you are!" but, should he come down when at speed, "Why, where are you?" But it is rare that a horse comes down in a very fast pace. Racehorses, who are not usually famed for safety, very seldom come down when at speed, unless from some circumstance irrespective of the pace, or their style of going it. It amounts to about this: with some horses it is whether the rider chooses to run the risk of the very great probability of an unsafe horse coming down in the trot, or going a faster pace where the odds are (say) fifty to one against it, and trusting, should it occur, to where he may find himself.

I think I may with confidence affirm that the unsafety we frequently find in sound horses in a slow pace arises from bad action, or carelessness of going; the unsafety of unsound horses in the same pace arises from their not being able to bear the lengthened pressure a slow pace produces on an infirm limb. Let us judge by analogy: if a man is so decrepit as to be unable to progress without the aid of crutches

or a couple of sticks, he walks slowly, as by doing so he is enabled to make his supports sustain the whole weight of his body. But we will suppose him not to be so absolutely infirm as this, yet still has feet he cannot bear to rest upon, he will be seen to take short quick steps, by doing which he releases each foot before the pain occasioned by pressure becomes intolerable. When coaching was in vogue, I have seen horses (particularly in night coaches) so lame that an inexperienced man of humane feelings might have been tempted to remark, "Why do you not let that poor brute work gently in a cart, instead of going ten miles an hour in a coach?" We could not but admire and applaud such expressed feeling; but it would be a matter of doubt whether the pain would not be more to such an animal to walk his eight hours in a cart than to trot one in a coach; the more so as, after he got warmed, he comparatively felt his infirmity at least bearable.

I have made this allusion to show why it is horses will frequently go safe in fast paces that are very much the reverse in slow ones.

As cripples are thus influenced by the dwelling for an undue period on a lame leg or foot, so are sound horses (though, of course, in a far less degree) rendered more or less unsafe from the same cause. This renders the majority of racehorses unsafe in their walk or slow trot. Persons are apt to impute their unsafety to their going near the ground. This does in a certain degree cause them to find obstructions to the advancing foot that would not be so to the horse with more elevated step; but cause them to step quicker, if the obstacles alluded to were struck, the other leg would come so quickly to the support of the advancing one that a little trip, or what is called a false step, would be only the momentary inconvenience; whereas, with the long stride such horses usually take in their step, and dwelling so long on one leg, they frequently come down headlong, before the support of the following leg can be brought to rectify the blunder made by the advancing one.

I think I may say that, of all the different styles of trotting that ordinary horses have, a regular darter is the worst (that is, the most unsafe.) And for the

advantage of the quite uninformed as regards pace, I will briefly state, that a horse who darts, throws forward the advancing leg nearly straight. Some are fast that do this; but, if they are, if they come on a rolling stone, or meet with any obstructions in putting the foot to the ground, to revert to the coachman's saying, "Where are you?" Speaking collectively, the horse on his nose, and the rider thrown far beyond it, the crash awful. Yet have I seen many men riding such horses with perfect confidence, from want of knowing their danger.

Many persons, in looking at a horse's trotting action, look merely at that of the fore legs. This may be all very well if we only want fashionable, in other terms, "knee action;" but if we want a *trotter*, it is as indispensable that he should have action with his hind legs as with his fore ones. This reminds me of the old Irish song—

"If the coach goes at six, pray what time goes the basket?"

We may safely infer that the basket started with the coach, and kept the same time on the road. So it

would be quite useless in the horse having action with his fore legs to do sixteen miles per hour unless his hind ones were gifted with correspondent propelling action. Of the two, I should augur more favourably of a young trotter who might not be quite what we wished as respected the trotting action of his fore legs than I should of one who failed in regard to his action with the hind ones; for it would be found far easier to improve the former by practice than the latter: no doubt, each are to be improved, but not in the same degree.

Trotters should have strong loins and gaskins. So, it may be said, should all horses; but I consider them particularly desirable in the trotter—from them come mainly the propelling powers of the hinder parts. A weak-loined horse, with strong thighs and hocks, has those powers to a certain extent; but if the loins tire, the whole hind part is prostrated. A very strong-limbed man afflicted with lumbago can judge of this. Weak loins certainly do not produce this; but they produce what is to a certain degree tantamount to lumbago—namely, helplessness.

Of all paces, I know of none that, as regards safety, requires a horse to be so well on his haunches as the trot. If the balance of the body has a tendency forwards, a horse thus circumstanced *must* be more or less unsafe. He may thunder along a great pace; but, anything throwing him a little more out of the equilibrium, down he goes, not merely on his knees, but ploughing up the earth for paces beyond where he first touches it. If we want a wager trotter, we must put up with his style of going, be it what it may, when practice and teachers cannot make it what we wish; but if we only want a good fast-goer, let us show our judgment in selecting one that goes in good and handsome form, and, above all, goes safely—for it would be but an ignominious finale to a man who had triumphantly led the van in our best hunting counties to be killed or maimed by a blundering hack on the road.

Persons riding on the road are many of them apt to get hacks too big. 14.3, with strength, is quite big enough for a road horse; whereas for a hunter, more from the always having ridden them than from

any decided opinion of their superiority, I always preferred somewhat big horses. But we do not want a hack to clear ox fences; and if we did not want a hunter to do it, my judgment, such as it is, tells me 15.2 is big enough for any horse.

There is another recommendation to little horses as road ones—they usually step shorter and quicker than large ones; and the reader of this article is aware of what I have said on that subject.

DRIVING.

We have seen many curious specimens of horsemanship in our streets, and in the environs of London; I say "have seen," for an equestrian has now become an object of rare occurrence, save and except among men of fortune patronising the Park from five or half-past till seven. What has become of the equestrians we used to see trotting along the New Road on their way from Paddington and its neighbourhood to the City? What of those hurrying along (if they found themselves late) from Highgate and Hampstead to their several places of business? Curious were the grotesque figures sometimes seen among such men. Well, it mattered not; they rode on horseback as the most eligible mode of conveyance then in use; and, provided they got safely to

their destination of a morning, and safely back to their families at night, it little mattered how it was done—all men are not bound to be horsemen.

Gigs of all sorts were seen about the same hours in the same localities, from the old-fashioned headed machine to the spruce gig, or stanhope, with its well-turned-out harness, and its nag that "could go a bit" on occasion, the driver showing himself no novice in at least gig driving. These mostly belonged to young men, probably junior partners, and generally found their way to Finsbury Square, where the livery stables teemed with them. The young whip gloried in showing Nunkey how the thing should be done; and the latter, though he did not vie with the younker, good-naturedly called him a lad of spirit; and probably his father was flattered by the compliment paid his son on his good taste. But now, "Bank, bank!" its long body but with short accommodation, has routed equestrians and drivers of the vehicles described off the road. Men, and eke women, have learned to submit to, and expect to have their feet made stepping-stones for those who

are admitted, who have no resource left but to pound their way to the front of the 'bus, where (if a tall man) your hat and head are made subservient to the opposite parts of the body of the driver, the roof being many inches lower than that of the other part of the roof for the purpose alluded to.

This is all very well for a makeshift; but, supposing papa does not like it, and remembers the driving himself in and out of town—as well might he propose to increase his establishment of two female servants by the addition of a butler and valet as to contemplate keeping a horse. The thing is set at rest by the "la reine le veut" of Mrs. Wilkins and the united voices of the Misses Wilkins, who never consider that, what with the good man's omnibus morning and evening, and their own as many days or evenings in the week as what they are pleased to consider as business or pleasure induce them to produce their sixpences, amount weekly to a sum that showed Wilkins's idea of keeping a horse was not so preposterous as it struck them. But few men have coolness enough or determination enough to have a

voice against a wife and three or more grown-up misses; but, unlike Richard, will let "the Heavens hear these tell-tale women rail on the Lord's anointed."

But it sometimes happens that such ladies as we may suppose the Mrs. and Misses Wilkins to be (gentlewomen are quite different beings) have a very fertile invention, and quick thought, as regards the carrying out any plan that bodes an accession to their own amusement, and still more so as regards their vanity. It will be recollected that Wilkins had "screwed his courage to the sticking point" (but could not keep it there), when he had mentioned the idea of keeping a horse. Now, whether the present bright thought originated with one of the spirited Misses Wilkins, or whether it was the maturer one of Mrs. Wilkins's brain, I know not, but certain it is, it was first mooted in close conclave among the ladies, was carried *nem. con.*, and now was proposed to Mr. Wilkins, not so much for the sake of his consent—for it was determined that with or without his approbation the question should be carried somehow

—but the ladies felt it could be done better, and with less trouble to themselves, by gaining his co-operation. Now, this notable project was the setting up a phaeton that would hold the five Wilkinses, it having just struck the lady that they could at times drop Wilkins at his house of business, and then the carriage would be at (that supreme delight of most females) their sole control for the day. The keeping a footman, or boy, with a coat to suit his temporary occupation of coachman, was in contemplation but *festina lente*. It was thought prudent at first to suggest that Jones, who came to do little odd things about the house and garden, should be engaged to drive the phaeton, though they knew not whether he had ever done such a thing in his life—to wash the carriage, clean the harness, and feed the horse. Of course, as their neighbours, who they only knew by name, had a man who did such things, and they had often admired the neatness of the turn-out—so, as Jones was a man, they held him capable of the same thing. Well, it is no use entering into particulars—of course, the project having been mentioned by the

coalition, it was virtually *un fait accompli.* The phaeton, horse, harness, stable utensils, were purchased. Jones, under some bargain, was installed in his office; and Wilkins, who, in his earlier (it would appear invidious to say happier) days, knew something about horses, endeavoured to instil a little common-place knowledge into his coachman elect, in which he most signally failed; but, having gained the point of clearly pointing out the quantity of hay, corn, and water, the horse was to take, and at what hours, he determined not to trouble his head about the way in which the equipage was to be turned out. If it satisfied the women, he determined it should not disturb him.

Mrs. Wilkins, having now to boast that she kept a carriage (as she said and thought) like the Countess of ——, was determined herself and daughters should assume the same mode of lounging or reclining in it as she had remarked many women of fashion indulge in. Consequently, Mrs. Wilkins sprawled herself in one corner, the Misses Wilkins in the others—forgetting or not knowing that what might be quite in

place in a phaeton with an unmistakeable coachman and footman, and the *tout ensemble* in the best taste and turned out in the best style, became most supremely ridiculous with a "yahoo" driving a vehicle half washed, and the harness showing as if what cleaning it had was achieved by the aid of an article borrowed from the cook-maid.

Mrs. Wilkins was, however, at the height of her wishes; she sported her "carriage," and probably would have remained in this state of blissful ignorance and fancied greatness, had not her aspiring thought suggested a drive in the Park after her two o'clock dinner. Arrived there, she of course ordered Jones to (if he could) get into the line of circulating carriages, the servants belonging to whom were far too well trained to indulge in any audible remarks, in the hearing of their mistresses, on Jones and his vehicle. Not so with sundry servants out of place, or, at all events, unluckily for the Wilkinses, out of employ for the time being. Sundry remarks were made; but Mrs. Wilkins and the Misses Wilkins felt quite at their ease, considering the remarks could not possibly

have their carriage for its object. The thing at last became too broad (not pointed) to be mistaken. "I say, Sammywell, who feeds the hogs while you are out?" "I say, bright'un, I'll give you a sov. to show me how you clean your harness." "What child's funeral have you been to, to get your white gloves?" alluding to the white cottons that his mistress had given the unfortunate Jones. But all things must have an end; they had run the gauntlet up the drive and back; when Mrs. Wilkins, her face white and red in succession, ordered Jones to drive home, where we leave the ladies in all their astonishment at the events of the day, and determined to ascertain from Wilkins, on his return home, what it could possibly be.

I have given a sketch showing the consequences of employing "Joneses" in the capacity of coachmen: this arises in the case of those living in town being perfect judges of whether a man puts up the shop shutters, or takes them down handily, or whether he arranges the shop according to rule of a morning; but, being no judges of whether or not he puts on

harness properly or the reverse, he might, for instance, put on the breeching so that it could by no possibility act, or the belly-band holding the tugs so long as to admit the rising of the shafts to such height as obliged the horse, when stopped, to stop the carriage by his tail and rump pressing against it. The master of the shop would probably be quick enough in detecting whether the show bottles of pickles, or the large canisters that contained *no tea*, though labelled as if they did, were in proper place; he is right in being able to do this, and deserves not our ridicule because he does not know whether the horse is properly attached to a vehicle or not; what means has he ever had of learning this? He sees an animal, and a carriage of some sort; he sees the animal move on, he also sees the carriage follow—what is to tell him all is not arranged as properly as possible?

The ladies of the family consider it as a matter of course that every male must more or less know how to drive, as they see and know that every female more or less has a knowledge of the use of the needle. Now, many a man can mend his stockings very

neatly, but knows no more about driving than he does of embroidery. The young lady would no more trust the making up of the commonest dress to the housemaid than she would to one of her father's shopmen; yet she will trust the safety of her life and limbs at times to a "Jones," who, probably, is far less an adept in driving than the housemaid is in dressmaking. If she perpetrated such an *enormity* as to trust her maid to make her dress, she would fancy that even in a phaeton, and closely enveloped in shawls, the odious dress showed somehow through, and that every eye was upon her: it would haunt her imagination, and she would be miserable; though, as unseen, it could produce no remark from any one. Now, though it is quite true that thousands know nothing as to how an equipage of any sort is arranged or turned out, hundreds do: and of the sneers and sarcastic remarks of such she is as morally certain as if she walked the streets with a bandanna bound round her head in Eastern fashion.

I know of few mere manual arts that, though they certainly call for no great exercise of mental attri-

butes, are more difficult of attainment than is the art of driving well. In fact, I can hold out but little encouragement to those who begin late in life; for I must honestly tell them the utmost they can hope to arrive at is to drive with safety under ordinary circumstances. This is found exemplified particularly with medical men, many of whom have driven their gigs for years, and look quite as much astray in them as they did the first day they started one. A man may be made a very fair, nay, a good horseman, who begins late in life, if properly instructed. It is true he probably may never show as a man likely to cross country with hounds; still he may pass muster among the generality of horsemen. But there is a mannerism in the way of doing the most trivial thing as respects driving, that shows at once the man who knows what he is about, and he who does not. You never see a coachman, whether gentleman or otherwise, get on to his box or into his phaeton without first glancing his eye over his horses; the man who is not one, steps into his vehicle as if that was his only care, and, after seating himself in it about as handily

as a clown would seat himself in a drawing-room chair, takes or is given his reins, and, with his hand or hands about a foot nearer the splashboard than one accustomed to driving would hold them, he gets, as Jack would say, "under weigh." A man intending to mount his horse need not confine himself to the regular riding-master's manner of doing the same thing; it would pass unnoticed; but the taking his reins in driving is quite a different affair. All men —that is, all driving men—do these things alike; the failing in which shows, on the contrary, a man knows nothing at all about the matter.

There can be no reason, supposing a man wishes to drive his family to any given place in search of business or pleasure, that he should not do so, though manifesting by so doing that he is no coachman; and, if the man at his side knows still less about the matter than he does, he perhaps acts judiciously in taking the reins in his own hands (and here, peradventure, may be a case in which he is permitted to do so without controversy in quarters that shall be nameless); but, supposing his attendant on the box,

though no coachman, from practice and imitation is greatly superior to his master, what on earth can induce the latter to undertake a task by which he exposes himself to remarks in no way flattering, and causes him constant trouble and watchfulness, seems an enigma somewhat difficult to solve. Of other persons' amusements it is not for me to judge; but certainly if I were asked to exhibit driving such a *cortége*, I should decline the compliment. I remember, when a boy, seeing the then Lord Sefton in a barouche and six in Hyde Park. I have read somewhere of an eccentric nobleman who sported a phaeton and six; but the phaeton *and six* we see daily in our streets is a somewhat different affair. I can quite understand the feelings of the captain of a fine fast-sailing frigate standing on the deck and feeling both pride and pleasure as he marks

"How gloriously her gallant course she goes;"

but for the soul of me I cannot conceive any pleasure a man could derive from undertaking the conduct of a barge up or down the Thames. I conceive

the difference between a well-appointed mail phaeton, with its two high and fast steppers, and the unaccommodating phaeton and six, to be about the same as that between the frigate and the barge.

I in no shape mean to infer that it is at all necessary that a man keeping a vehicle for the use of his family, involves the necessity of keeping an expensive servant either to drive or take charge of them. The attributes of a very clever servant are by no means necessary for such a place. Persons are apt to say: "Servants are the *plague* of one's life." I always set down such persons as somewhat low, and never having been accustomed to keep good ones. I beg so far to differ from such sweeping allegations against servants as to assert, "Servants are one of the great *comforts* of one's life"—not, certainly, such as persons who change every two, three, or four months, and then seek to replace them on the bare chance of finding better.

Many persons have strange ideas as regards the purchasing and then managing their horses, equipages, and even their houses. They are not less sin-

gular in their ideas of servants: they get a bad class, and then do not blame their own selection, but the so-styled servant, as regards whom the spirit of Brummel's remark on a bad-made coat may with truth be applied: "My dear fellow, do you call that thing a servant?"

DRAUGHT, HARNESS, AND DRIVING.

This article being written in compliance with a lady's wish, I feel sure that, though it may not personally interest many of my male readers, it will be read with more zest than those on subjects that directly involve their own convenience or safety.

Draught is the first subject mentioned; but I doubt the fair querist being aware how much is contained in that simple word. Very clever works have been written on the subject, to which I should recommend the notice of those desirous of becoming acquainted with the complex nature of draught. Such study would, however, be time almost thrown away on the part of a lady; for, after having made herself mistress of the subject, after becoming quite aware of the kind of vehicle running with the easiest

draught, she would find it perhaps one it would be quite impossible for her to use. For example, if I were to convince her that the principle on which a mail phaeton is made, causes it to run with far more ease to the horses than does one on the construction of her own pony-carriage, she would gain little by the knowledge; for a lady, or at all events a gentlewoman, could not be seen driving a mail phaeton, even if disposed to sacrifice her own convenience and comfort for the sake of her horses. And while I must admit that the usual run of carriages for ladies' use are built on a construction at total difference from the principles of easy draught, so they must remain; nor does it much matter; for in the present perfect state of our roads, for the short distances and short time a lady is supposed to use the horses she drives, she may at least have the satisfaction of knowing that though the carriage she drives is on a bad principle, as relates to facility of draught, the goodness of the roads more than counterbalances such defect. It may be mooted that notwithstanding the advantage of good roads, why not have a

carriage good in principle also? This seems reasonable, and, in fact, it is so; but in reply, it is impossible to build a carriage for a lady's use, that is, such as they have for many years used, and combine facility of draught with elegance (according with present taste) of appearance. I apprehend our respected grandmothers did not drive themselves; for if they had it would have been impossible for a carriage with the low wheels now in use, and those placed so far apart, to have got along on roads in the state they then were: the fore part of the carriage would have been up to the axle-tree in gravel and mud. *Mais tout cela est changé*, so we may use low wheels with impunity. Formerly, when coaching was in vogue, coach-owners were forced to sacrifice the ease of their passengers in the build of coaches, to facilitate, as much as possible, the draught of the carriage. Now, railroads can, and do, so far as first-class carriages are concerned, consult the comfort of the passengers, without considering whether the carriage may or may not be constructed so as to cause facility of progression. In a

minor way, we may consult the ease and taste of ladies, without troubling our heads whether the carriage may or may not be on a construction affording horses the advantage of scientific principles of draught.

As regards harness, to which the lady calls my attention, I am not aware of any peculiar form or make constituting any greater degree of safety than the form in ordinary use. This is a case in which elegance of appearance may be strictly carried out without the slightest want of safety to the fair owner, or the smallest drawback on the ease or comfort of her horses. It is not for me to point out good taste; but, in a general way, I consider brass mountings preferable to plated, and there should not be more than necessary of them; too much ornament always savours a little of the sheriff's carriage. One thing I must remark—plated mountings to grey horses I consider odious. There is one thing, as regards safety, that I should strongly recommend for a lady's use; this is *quoad* the size of the horse's *commanding-bits*—not that I consider any horse for

her use should, in a general way, require one. But, however good a mouth her horse may have, there is such a thing as sudden excitation, and sudden fright, and a lady should have an appliance to resort to on such occasions that may enable her weak arm, by its aid, to become something in effect like the more powerful one of man. Now, commanding-bits, with the reins to the cheeks, or a little below them, are no more irksome to horses than those of less power; so, even if a lady had not the delicate touch we usually find a female to possess, her horses are in no way inconvenienced by her bits, if the reins, or rather billets, are properly adjusted to them; but her safety-reins, without which no lady should risk herself, being fastened to the lowest ring on her bits, give her at once an *appui* that she can effectually resort to on any emergency.

I should always recommend a lady to drive with hip-straps to her traces. Horses lightly worked are apt to be playful, and will sometimes give a squeak and a kick, without intending the slightest harm or having a particle of vice in their dispositions.

Ladies' carriages are all hung extremely low, and the lowness of the fore wheels brings the fore part of the carriage very near the ground, consequently the splinter-bar and roller-bolts, to which the traces are attached, are correspondingly low; it must therefore be quite evident that the slightest elevation of the horse's leg would cause him, in technical phrase, to "kick over his trace," which, with the quietest horse in the world, is apt to end in alarming or dangerous consequences. Now, the hip-strap does not, as some persons imagine, in any way prevent a horse kicking, nor is it intended for such purpose, but on any rise of the haunch of the horse it carries the trace up, or, as we may term it, out of the way of his leg; and for this it is most useful—I may say, necessary.

Above all things to be avoided by a lady, is the driving timid, nervous horses. She is never safe for a moment when trusting to such. Let her have a pair of as playful or high-couraged animals as her proficiency as a charioteer will warrant. Such seldom intend harm or commit it. Any little ebullition of

spirit or playfulness, a little presence of mind, judgment, and commanding-bits to have recourse to, will counteract; but a scared horse is unmanageable, and constant occurrences take place in our streets to produce this. Neither a nervous, timid man or horse are worthy the service of a lady.

My fair friend has expressed a wish that I should write a series of articles on driving. I would do so with much pleasure were I not aware that I can advise her in a far better way. It is hard if, among her friends and acquaintances, there is not one to be found perfectly *au fait* in this particular; let her delegate to him the pleasing task of sitting by her side and giving her lessons in driving, for it is impossible for pen, or at least impossible for me, to give her rules to meet every contingency; and if even I could, I feel I should deserve little of my brother men if I was the means of depriving some one of them of the flattering task alluded to.

Having said thus much as regards safety and driving, I must explain a little error ladies labour under as regards the specific weight of the carriages

they use. A lady orders and sees come home an elegant toy-like carriage; she feels pleasure in thinking its lightness will not cause much exertion on the part of her horses drawing it. She deceives herself; this gossamer appearance of lightness is gained by iron substituting the absence of any substance of wood; thus it becomes specifically heavy, and is so. But, as I said respecting the build of such carriages being at variance with facility of draught, for the time purposed, and on the roads ladies use them, the weight matters little; and could we instil the feelings of man into horses, they would think nothing of any exertion to gratify the taste and convenience of their fair owners.

PULLING HORSES.

An article which appeared in The Field, signed "Boarspear," relative to his hard-pulling mare, is, take it all in all, perhaps as difficult a one to answer in any satisfactory way as could be proposed. For most horses that have disagreeable habits there are remedies to be found, that will either mitigate or cure them; but where their acts are the result of temper or temperament, it becomes next to impossible to find an effectual remedy, as it is virtually the temper we have to deal with, more than the fault; for what might be effectual in stopping the fault might very probably so irritate the temper as to render the animal all but ungovernable, and, what is worse, or as bad, inappeasable.

The observations of "T. S. H." in The Field of

May 16, 1857, on the subject of pulling horses, are perfectly correct and judicious. A twisted snaffle and martingale seems the most likely kind of bit for an intemperate animal to be ridden with. He states a "running martingale;" if by that he means merely a martingale through which the reins run from the rider's hand to the bit, I venture the suggestion that with such second rein, if "Boarspear's" mare should get her temper up, he might not be able to control her; but if he were to use a rein fixed to either the girths or saddle-flaps, then running through the rings of the bit, and thus coming to the rider's hand, I can only say I never yet found a horse that could go away with me with such an *appui;* and, as "T. S. H." most judiciously remarks, such artificial force given to the arms of the rider is far more likely to succeed than "holding on by the curb."

"Boarspear" complains that his mare sometimes will take immense fences cleverly and quietly; the next day "her frightful rushes place my neck in great danger." "T. S. H.," with great good judg-

ment, recommends practising her over small fences, making her almost walk up to them, and then caressing her when obedient. Nothing can be more judicious than such advice; but he seems oblivious of the circumstance that the mare's habits do not arise from ignorance or want of practice, but from temper; and who can tell on putting her at a fence what temper she may please to be in? For myself, I can only say, with a lady of so uncertain a one, I should trouble myself little whether she rushed or not, not having so great a dread of rushing horses as some persons have, for they seldom fall unless in very cramp countries and at very blind fences; but I should take especial care the lady always exerted herself so as to clear what I put her at. She could but be out of temper, at the worst; and, perhaps, when she found her temper availed her nothing, she might condescend to go with a little more amenity. It is true that accustoming her to walk up to her fences and take them leisurely might induce her to do the like so long as the same system was persevered in; but with hounds this would be impossible.

So, the first time she was ridden freely at a fence, all the previous practice would be set at nought, and she would rush at them as impetuously as ever; for be it remembered, though habit may do a good deal, it will not cure temper.

Her becoming more than ordinarily impatient in windy weather I can in no way account for, never having found or heard of a horse being influenced by such circumstance. I should rather attribute her impatience to some other unnoticed cause, such as, perhaps, in cold, windy weather, her master may ride a little faster than ordinary, and, if in company, the talking a little louder than usual (which windy days may render necessary), I should say, with so irritable or nervous a lady, would be sufficient to affect her temper. This is merely a suggestion; but for a circumstance for which I cannot in any way account, I do not pretend to be able to offer a remedy.

Her pulling and irritability in hot weather, though unusual, is by no means a solitary case. Horses, like ourselves, are differently affected by heat. Some

it renders so indolent, they seem hardly to care whether they walk or come down; in fact, some horses continually blunder in hot weather, though not addicted to the habit at other times. Some are so affected by sun and heat as to be subject to attacks of meagrims during such weather, though by no means so in any other. A mare like "Boar-spear's" would be put out of temper and become impatient by the slightest thing that inconveniences her; and when in an irritable mood she pulls, no doubt the heat annoys her, and this produces the pulling. There is another circumstance to account for her irritability, which is the flies. These, in hot weather, will worry the most placid-tempered animal, and frequently render him unpleasant to ride or drive. I had a mare that carried my wife. I have no hesitation in pronouncing her one of the cleverest woman's horses I ever had—or say as a hunter, or on the road; but I was induced to part with her from her impatience (I may almost term it frenzy) when the flies were troublesome. Perhaps a very long price had something to do with my resolve.

I told her failing; but the nobleman to whom I sold her purchased her solely to carry a lady with hounds.

Extraneous objects and noises frequently put an irritable horse on the *qui vive*, when, before they attracted his notice, he was perhaps going placidly and pleasantly. He sees, for instance, three or four horses under some influence galloping about a field by the road-side. We cannot suppose this annoys him, but it disturbs his equanimity, temper, or spirits; whichever it may be are roused by it, he begins to chafe and fret, gets impatient, or, as would be the case with the mare in question, begins to pull. Should the hedge or fence be high enough and thick enough to prevent his seeing the horses, and he only hears them, it usually makes things worse. He hears a noise, but cannot see the cause; consequently, perhaps alarm is added to the category of his excitements, for horses are frequently alarmed, or, at all events, disturbed, by sounds; but so soon as they ascertain from whence they proceed, they become at once reassured and recover their placidity.

Whenever I mention myself any particular horses I may have had, or what I may have done with them, let me beg the reader not to impute it to egotism, but a wish to show that I have something like proof for what I may set forth, suggest, or advise.

I have stated that horses in any way nervous or high-tempered are much affected by sounds and noises, particularly when arising from any object or circumstance they cannot see. I have had two remarkable in this particular, the one a mare. Whether in harness or out, a horse or carriage behind her drove her almost mad; let either come alongside of her, she was quiet directly. When in harness, if she but heard a horse behind her, up went her head and tail, and she would bound something as we have seen a fallow deer do in passing us; and, though at other times possessing a fine mouth, on such occasions it was difficult to hold her. The other horse was a hunter, as placid and steady as a horse could be when alongside hounds in chase; but, while they were finding, or, what was worse,

running in cover, the cry of the pack would cause him to tremble with anxiety or some such feeling, and he would burst into a sweat ten times more profuse than any run would call forth. Being both good horses and pleasant, except in these particulars, I was determined to try and palliate them. I had a pair of thick earcaps made for each of them. This I found produced a wonderful alteration for the better; but it struck me these earcaps must heat the horse. Why not try cotton? I did; stuffed their ears well with it when using them; and found no inconvenience from sounds afterwards. In some cases, and with some horses, my friends may find it answer the purpose also.

TREATMENT OF AILING HORSES, &c.

In a prevous article on Starting and Shying, I mentioned defective or deceptive sight as one of the causes of these failings, and I am bold enough to say I feel confident I shall be borne out in this opinion by professional men.

Many persons form a very delusive and ill-founded opinion as regards the propriety of applying to a veterinary surgeon, and consequently often sustain great loss by tampering with their horses themselves, or, what is far worse, permit their grooms to do the same thing. A man must know little indeed of the ailments of horses if he does not know, from some information or other, more than an ordinary groom. If he does not, it is the very reason why he should seek for his horse professional advice; for, without

it, he can be no judge whether the animal is being scientifically treated, or his disease or ailment aggravated. The next, and perhaps worse, step many take, is to seek the advice of some mere farrier. Now, the groom, probably, does not venture beyond his favourite remedies—"a rattling dose of physic," a "good strong diuretic," or a "warm oil"—the latter applied to any enlargement, whether it proceeds from inflammation or weakness; but the farrier has (in his own estimation) professional skill, has got hold of the names (but not the subsequent effects) of iodine, opium, croton-oil, euphorbium, &c., with some others, the aid (or rather detriment) of which he calls in on certain appearances manifesting themselves, without the slightest consideration of the origin of such appearance. We will say a horse's legs swell when in the stable. He begins, in his phrase, to "clear the humour out of him" by a strong dose of, say, ten or twelve grains of the commonest or worst description of aloes, this followed by a course of diuretics; orders the horse only to get bran, or grass if it is to be had; and probably

completes the thing by bleeding. Fortunately, these men, when they do bleed, seldom take blood enough away to do much harm, and never enough (in cases that call for such proceeding) to do any good. Now all this is done, very probably, in a case that calls for tonics and generous nutriment.

We all know (at least, most men accustomed to horses know) that, from the mode in which we feed and use them, inflammation accompanies most of their disorders; but, though a *mild* dose of physic may *prevent* inflammation of the bowels, a *strong* dose, given when inflammation has taken place, may very probably cause death. It is quite certain we do not want a veterinary surgeon to administer a ball; but many persons do very much want his professional skill to determine whether such ball (be its usual effects what they may) is proper to be given in a particular disease, or in a particular stage of that disease.

Mr. Major advertises his "British Remedy" as a cure for recent, or, in many cases, for diseases of long standing, and I am quite willing to accord my

humble meed of praise to the efficacy of his remedy ; but I would by all means recommend any man not thoroughly conversant with the ailments of horses to send his horse to Mr. Major, for inspection, prior to applying the remedy, and I have no doubt but in such case he would be honourably and honestly told whether a cure could be effected, or, if not, how far the remedy might be effectual as a palliative ; for we are not told it will reduce a regularly anchylosed joint of any long standing. In such case a man might as well apply it to the horse's shoe ; he would only experience expense, waste of time, and disappointment, all of which a simple fee of half a guinea would have avoided, or he would be gladdened by the assurance of a cure being effected.

Many people believe, and I have heard them frequently state, to use their own terms, "If I send my horse to a veterinary surgeon, he will be sure to make *a job* of it." In the generality of such cases such impression is both illiberal and unjust. I should as soon suspect, and in fact insult, Sir B. Brodie, by supposing he would make a job of me, as

I should accuse a man of Mr. Field's respectability (and many others) of making a job of my horse. Men's parsimony in the first place often (and it is quite right, by way of example, it should be so) ends in severe loss in the long run.

I have not, personally, paid much to the veterinary profession—this not arising from any want of confidence or any fear of being subject to any charges beyond what would be a fair remuneration for their skill and trouble; but solely from the fact that I mostly paid such attention to my horses as stopped any ailment or disease before it arrived at such height as required professional skill to control. But I never for a moment delayed seeking such advice where I was in doubt or difficulty, and I should strongly recommend others to do the same.

There are two ways of doing this: the one being to get a vet. to visit the horse at his own stable; the other the sending the horse to the stable or infirmary of the professional man. In most cases I should recommend the latter. In case of illness, the animal is not subject to cold in his walk to and from the

infirmary; and in case of hurts, when he is there, all the appliances necessary on the occasion are at hand. You, of course, pay a few shillings per week more for the horse standing there than he would cost you at home; but to set against this, if a professional man has to visit the horse, a fair remuneration for so doing will be found to mount up to a sum a great deal more than the difference of charge for livery. Again, it takes up a good deal of a servant's time; but, worse than this, if the man is not a very trustworthy one, a sick horse being held at a public-house door by any boy who may be by, while the groom regales himself within, is not exactly desirable for an animal perhaps under the influence of calomel, nor very likely to promote the efforts of the professional man towards a cure.

There is another objection to horses remaining at home while under medical treatment. Servants, unless watched, are very apt not to carry out the vet.'s directions in an attentive and proper manner; for instance, a horse is ordered warm fomentations to be applied for perhaps an hour at a time. This hour is

very apt to be curtailed three parts, so that the man may with truth assert the horse "has been fomented." He has, but in a way that is of no more use, in a medical point of view, than is the warm water the man applies to his own face while shaving. The swelling and heat of the part does not by this diminish, and when it does it is probably the medicine the animal has taken internally that alone produces a favourable change.

I should say that horses in disease call for professional aid even more than human beings. It is true their ailments are not usually of so complex a nature as are man's; but we can learn from the latter the seat of the disease, and the sensations felt. Those of the horse can only be judged of by symptoms. Of these, few but a professional practitioner can judge. Therefore, I am quite sure, in most cases, I advise well in recommending early application for professional skill and experience, though it may at first entail a little cost. That is more than repaid by the time it saves, and also, probably, saving the life of a valuable animal, who

would otherwise fall a victim to the effects of ignorance or pretended ability where none exists.

There are few specific cases that have led to more disputes, private or legal, than the apparently simple one as to whether a horse is or is not sound. With deference I submit my ideas as regards this often disputed point. I conceive a sound horse to be one at the time free from ailment, either outwardly or internally, and one who exhibits no direct predisposition or likelihood, with fair and judicious treatment, to become otherwise.

The taking a professional opinion on this subject generally saves an infinity of after-trouble and dispute. It sets the case at rest at once; a horse having undergone such scrutiny acquits in nine cases in ten the seller of any imputation of having (willingly) sold an unsound horse, and may in most cases satisfy the purchaser that he has bought a sound one. But be it remembered that neither the physician nor veterinarian is infallible, though in most cases correct, and the vet., when called on in his public capacity to examine a horse, has only to

pronounce his opinion as to whether the animal is sound, or the reverse, at the time he is shown to him for examination. As an honest man, he does this, and is bound, in all fairness between buyer and seller, so to do; but at the same time the *opinion* he so gives is a very different thing to the *advice* he might give to a friend as a friend. For instance, some horses' hocks are so formed, and so placed, as, in technical phrase, to cause the horse to be termed a "curby-hocked one," which means that, when put to work, the horse having such is almost sure to throw out curbs, or spavins, of more or less magnitude.

Now this is no unsoundness, nor can it physically, or rather anatomically, be called a "malformation," though it virtually is so. The vet. would not be justified in rejecting such a horse as an unsound one, though he might privately advise a friend not to buy him; and there are many cases indicating a likelihood of ailment that are no present or immediate certainties of bringing an unsoundness. We must not hang a man on suspicion, nor

is a vet. authorised in condemning a horse on the same premises.

I think I may say that, among the very many horses I have bought for myself, I never took half-a-dozen professional opinions in my life; and among the hundreds, and many hundreds they have been, that I have purchased for others I have very rarely omitted doing it. It has been a satisfaction to myself doing so, and no imputation could then be cast on my judgment; and again, I felt, and I would strongly recommend others to consider the same, that, in the case of the lowest-priced horse, if he was worth 20*l.*, he was worth 20*l.* 10*s.* What I might choose to do in my own case has nothing to do with the matter. If I chose to trust to my own judgment in such cases, the risk was only mine; and, fortunately for me, I did not often suffer by it.

There are cases in which no professional skill can insure our not getting an unsound, or, at least, an objectionable, animal into our possession—for instance, one subject to meagrims or staggers on occasion, particularly in very hot weather. A horse may

have had a strain, from which he was, to all human judgment or foresight, cured. He appeared so at the time of sale, but on being put to work the old grievance comes out. In cases where fraud is intended, hot water and positive rest will do wonders, against which all skill is set at naught. A chronic cough, quietude and sedative medicines will sometimes allay. In short, there are cases in which the most astute medical practitioner may be deceived by equally astute rascality. I could make a regularly broken-winded one breathe as placidly, and without that peculiar jerk of the abdominal parts, as any sound-winded horse (that is, for a few hours)—by what means I need not tell those in the secret, and certainly shall not tell those who are not.

The only resource left us in cases where treatment baffles even professional skill, is to find out whether the animal has at a prior date been subjected to lameness or constitutional defect; in such case, though he went sound at the time of sale, and no visible remains of disease existed, he was not, strictly speaking, a sound horse, and a seller would by any

jury be cast, and compelled to take him back. I mention these cases, which are, perhaps, of rare occurrence, to show that, if persons with professional skill and ingenuity may yet be deceived, how little ought the generality of buyers to trust to their own judgment.

I am quite ready to admit that few men holding the character of gentlemen would so far degrade themselves as to sell an unsound horse for a sound one. I should equally acquit a respectable dealer in horses from any such intention; but either may be, or have been, deceived; and one or the other, on selling a horse, and on his being subjected to professional investigation, may be perfectly astonished at finding him rejected as an unsound animal. The gentleman would probably be at once exonerated from any dishonourable intention by his compeers, but nine persons in ten would at once condemn the dealer as having endeavoured to impose upon them. Give a dog a bad name, &c.; but the former sweeping allegations against dealers are fast wearing away, and people very properly now hold a respectable dealer in horses in the same light as a respectable

dealer in any other marketable commodity. The chief cause that led to the dealer in horses being held in the bad odour he was, arose from the variable nature of the article in which he dealt. A wine merchant can decide to a certainty whether his wine is sound or not; a dealer in horses cannot come to so decided an opinion as regards his horses.

It appears somewhat extraordinary to those well acquainted with horses, the difficulty there sometimes is in making others perceive that a horse goes unequally—in fact, goes lame; they cannot detect it in the gait of the animal. There is one way in which I have found them detect it at once. If it is a sunshiny day, direct their attention to the shadow of the horse's head on the ground, or better still, against a wall; here they will perceive a jerk in the shadow by the motion of the head, that no pointing out could make them detect in the motions of the animal. The same holds good as regards a horse defective in his wind. Place him against any fixed object; the sudden jerk of the body that horses thus affected usually make is perceived at once,

though not to be detected by an unpractised eye, by merely looking at the horse as he stands under ordinary circumstances. Such practice is not, I grant, very artistic; but it answers the purpose when used in the case of those who are not artists.

I frequently remember the old adage:—

> "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing;
> Drink deep, or taste not, &c."

If a man knows enough to save himself in ordinary cases from loss or deception as regards his horses, it is well; but if he knows just so much more as to induce him to act on his own judgment, without that judgment being sufficiently formed to secure him from error, he has only sipped of the water of knowledge, but has not drunk deep enough for any useful purpose. For those in the latter situation I have ventured a few observations on the subject of soundness in the article at page 45.

CORNS IN HORSES.

THERE are few ailments that lame more or cause more acute pain to the horse than do corns, if not properly treated, and few that are more easily alleviated if scientifically set about. Corns, I quite believe, are a disease incident to some horses, as I am quite convinced they are to some persons. Skilful chiropodists will so far alleviate their effects, that a man may walk and feel no inconvenience from them: this in no way proves that he cures them—his skill may prevent any inconvenience being felt for weeks, or months, but the disease continues, and in time, less or more, its effects will be found to continue. It is a received axiom that pressure produces corns. I do not conceive it quite amounts to this: the germ of the disease is there, and pressure produces lameness; but I am very much inclined to doubt whether pressure

would produce a *bonâ fide* corn in a perfectly healthy foot; it would certainly produce a bruise; but if a corn was not inherent in the foot, I feel clear that so soon as such bruise was found and cured, it would be, like a bruise of any sort, cured radically. If the same improper pressure was applied, of course the foot would be again bruised, again to be cured; and afterwards shoe the horse fairly and well, we should find no more of the temporary ailment.

Let us now consider of what leading characters the foot of the horse consists. There will be found to be the wall, or crust, the sole (covering) the sensible part of the foot, the frog, and the bars. Now these bars join the crust of the foot at the heel, and form an acute angle there, from whence they run to the narrow point or termination of the frog. It must be quite clear to any one that any sensible part of the foot confined, I may say jammed in, by an acute angle formed by the two different parts, that foot must more or less undergo the pressure spoken of; and it is in this angle between the bars and wall of the foot that corns are inherent, or the bruises I have

spoken of are found to exist. It may be asked, and very reasonably, as the horse's foot is formed the same on the inside as the out, and the shoe formed the same, or nearly so, at both heels, how happens it that a corn on the outside is a circumstance of very rare occurrence? The only reason I can surmise is, that, from some natural cause, he treads heavier on the inside than the out; and, supposing my idea to be correct, we have not found out any mode to prevent this. Having stated the nature of corns, to the best of my experience, observation, and anatomical knowledge of the foot, I will state other causes that produce pressure besides the being confined in the corner spoken of between the bars and the crust: this is pressure from the upper surface, namely, the sole. This, as may be at once apparent, produces the same effect or result as does the accumulation of hardened substance that from time to time thickens on our corn, if we are unfortunate enough to have one. Most persons are more or less quite acquainted with the pain it creates. It is the same with the horse. It would be well for him if we

could at once, and as effectually, relieve him as we can ourselves; but, unfortunately, common blacksmiths do not do this, or even set about it the right way to effectually produce the wished effect. Many persons have remarked that a horse with corns will frequently, I will say generally, go firm and sound for some days, more or less, after being shod. The fact is, the cause of lameness *has* been for a brief time removed, that is, the corn has been relieved of pressure. Smiths are apt enough to slice away at the frog. They have learned from practice and observation that the upper coat for a certain thickness is perfectly insensible, and have ascertained by practice also how far they may, in the generality of cases, go before they approach the sensible part. I never found a smith who thus acted, who could give a more sensible reason for his cuttings than that "it kept the frog in shape and looked neat" when the new-shod foot was looked at.

With deference to these gentry, I beg to say it never fell to my lot to see a frog grow out of proper shape, except in a state of disease. I have

seen in a common smith's pent-house half-a-dozen curs waiting for the cuttings from horses' frogs, of which they are inordinately fond. They might wait long enough at Mr. Field's, of Oxford Street, before they got a chance of a "bonne bouche." The closely paring a horse's healthy frog is tantamount to taking a man's comfortable walking shoes off, and turning him going on a newly macadamised road in a pair of dancing pumps.

They have heard that the bars are intended to "spread the hocks." They were intended for no such thing, but were placed there to support the crust and retain the foot in its natural and healthy shape; what shape it may contract from acute disease is another matter. They are not content to take away as much of the wall, the sole, and the bars, as to place them in the same relative position as regards each other as they were before, but will pare down the sole, leaving the bars standing up a perfect ridge each side the horse's frog—I suppose from thinking they are better judges of proportion than is or was Nature, who formed the foot. If we

send a horse to an inferior smith, and the servant tells him the horse has corns, he usually begins by lowering the wall or crust, whether it wants it or not; he then holds it necessary to take away a certain part of the insensible sole, whether there is any overgrowth or not. He then comes to the frog, which he works away at till its appearance pleases him; then comes the rasp, to bring, if possible, the foot to a certain shape. If naturally a spread or wide one, the rasp travels along the out and inner side—the workman, with a knowing look, regarding it till he has probably weakened the crust so far as to render it a matter of serious difficulty and risk to find hold for the nails. This done, he sets to work to find the corn. For this purpose a small drawing knife, called "a searcher," is called into requisition; with this, (I can find no better term) he *digs* away where practice has taught him the corn is to be expected—namely, the inside heel between the crust and the bar. I should mention that, prior to such anatomical search, in most cases he sets the foot on the ground, and, coming in front, probably says to the servant, with a

self-satisfied air, "There! his foot looks a very different thing to what it did when you brought him." But to return to the searching. After considerable digging in the corner, and the whole superstructure of sole being removed, the corn is come at, and, as it sometimes happens, the sensible part of the foot is come at also.

The smith, satisfied with the shape to which his paring and rasping had brought the foot, and having discovered the latent corn, or at all events bruise, we must suppose he would have been equally satisfied with his work had he taken a mule-footed horse in hand, and, by dint of paring away the toes and front part of his foot, had brought it somewhat into the shape of a well-formed one. But to the work in hand. Having removed all direct top pressure, he commences fitting on the shoe; the pain is partially removed, that is, so far as super-pressure is concerned; but there remains lateral pressure. This at first may not much affect the horse, and he goes sound, or comparatively so, for a time. But mark the inevitable result; he has so weakened the

super-stratum of insensible sole while groping for the corn, that he has deprived the foot of any power of resisting the close approach of the wall of the foot and the bars; he has, in fact, counteracted the intent of Nature, which originally was that each part might have the power of performing its appointed function. The consequence is, from the want of the accustomed support, the pressure of the shoe at the heel in a few days bends the weakened wall on which it rests inwards, and the shoe finally bears on the corn, and lameness returns with all its pristine grievance.

It is true there are some horses the crust of whose foot is so strong that, though you diminish inside support, it is strong enough to support the shoe, keeping it from pressure on the ailing part. Where such is the case, the horse may go in an ordinary shoe; but where the crust is thin, it will not bear the abstraction of the inward support, and a strapped or bar shoe will become necessary. We know that in a general way the undue lowering of the heel is objectionable. So are corns. It therefore merges

into this, whether it is better to lower the crust and cut away the bars and heels in a correspondent degree to the quantum of sole we remove, or to leave the horse more than half a cripple; for I consider that in many cases we are left but to choose between the two alternatives.

The difference between a strapped shoe and a bar one is, the latter is somewhat rounded at the heel, the former may be made all but square; in point of fact, they are pretty much the same, the great merit of both being that they pass over the frog, to which the iron part that connects the heels may in the centre be flattened; and to this flat centre may be affixed a piece of shoe-sole leather on the part on which the frog bears, thus giving the shoe a bearing on the frog that greatly lessens that on the heels, and effectually prevents any pressure on the corn, and likewise saves it from hurt by exposure to casualties. It must be quite clear to any one that a horse with a sore corn, if he comes on a projecting sharp and very hard substance, must drop from sheer pain. Whether he falls or not, will depend

partly on his gameness and resolution, and partly on the quickness with which he brings the sound leg (if he has one) to the relief of the afflicted one. If both feet are afflicted, the necessity of strapped or bar shoes becomes apparent.

There are many persons who, from prejudice, object much to either; they think they have a tendency to contract the foot, and say, pertinently enough, "How can a horse's foot expand with a piece of iron run across the heels that would prevent it doing so?" This would be all very well, if it was a correct representation of the case; but persons must bear in mind that, though the heels of an iron shoe cannot expand, whether it be a common made one or a bar shoe, the horse's foot can. It may be objected, and frequently is, "How can the foot expand when confined to the shoe by nails?" I quite admit the side crust cannot; but let any one look at a properly shod foot, they will find the nailing and nail-holes cease long ere the heels begin. Again, let any one remove a shoe of any kind after it has been worn three weeks or a month, they will find by

the polish and marks on the heels of the shoe that those of the horse have had ample space and liberty to expand, if disposed to do so. Contracted heels and feet arise from various causes, chiefly, I should say, from internal disease; but I conceive it to be rarely the case that a really healthy foot becomes a contracted one from the effects of shoeing alone.

There is another circumstance connected with the shoeing of the horse that probably has never attracted the thought or notice of the casual observer. Let us shoe a yearling for the first time; he naturally feels awkward in his shoes, from various causes, but also from one that strikes but few of us. He has been accustomed to feel his foot, toe, sides, heels, and frog, bearing equally on the ground. Now, by our mode of shoeing and the form of the shoe, we deprive him of (say) one fifth of the support his foot has been accustomed to feel; in fact, by the formation of the shoe we deprive him of support to the frog at all. From this he would feel probably no inconvenience if immediately led into a soft meadow, where the shoe could bury itself deep enough in the

yielding surface to enable the frog to get its accustomed support. This is why hunters and race-horses do not suffer from our mode of shoeing. Their principal and severest work is done on soft ground, and this neutralises what would otherwise be the dire effects of taking all support from the frog. Set the foot on the smooth surface of a well-made highroad, you would perceive, as the shoe could make no impression, the vast amount of support of which we deprive the leg of the horse. The frog is an important portion of the foot—an elastic cushion placed at the heel, to take off the concussion that would be otherwise thrown on the sheath of the back sinews, in fact, on the sinews themselves, and all the surrounding parts of the back part of the leg. Much has been said on the subject of "concussions and hard roads." Persons are apt to think the only concussion to be feared is that which affects the foot of the horse on hard roads: this is, I admit, bad enough, but that which arises as regards the back sinews having no support is infinitely more to be dreaded; and I

think I am right in saying that, if I had a horse engaged in a gallop match against time, on a hard road, like the one performed some years back on the Brighton road, he should most unquestionably do it with strapped shoes, well padded with leather for the frog to rest upon; and I am quite sure all horses used on hard roads would go better in such shoes than in those in general use. Fortunately for horses, usual road work is not severe enough or fast enough to render change in the mode of shoeing necessary for sound horses; and many persons are so influenced by appearances, that, rather than use a somewhat unusual shoe, they will use a cripple, that might be made to go with ease to himself and safety to his employer, by judicious shoeing. If a man not conversant with such matters himself, has a horse thus situated, let him send him to a first-rate veterinarian, with permission to shoe him as *his* judgment directs; he may then depend on it, all that can be done will be, to remedy the ailment.

PECULIARITY OF SHAPE IN HORSES.

THERE is a saying among horsemen, that "They go in all shapes." This is quite true, and many do go better than common, still owning very queer shapes; but though it may please nature at times to produce such *lusus naturæ*, both as to shape and action, such circumstance in no shape warrants us in being careless as to shape or the usual indications of capability in the animal. Such cases as I allude to are merely a departure from general rule in particular horses, whereas perhaps nineteen in twenty owning the same drawback will be found to prove what a judge would anticipate, namely, that, comparatively speaking, they cannot go at all.

I am induced to take up this subject from a circumstance that occurred lately; walking with an

acquaintance, he remarked a horse, led by a servant, and observed, "What a particularly fine shoulder that horse has!" It would have been uncourteous to say, (though perfectly true), "On the contrary, he has a very middling shoulder;" and, being a mere acquaintance, I did not think it worth my while to enter on a long explanation to convince him he was in error; but it struck me that some persons may form equally erroneous opinions respecting any peculiarity of shape they may remark in horses. Hence this article.

The peculiarity in the horse in question was having a singularly high wither. All judges will, I believe, agree that a handsomely-turned one, of a moderate height, set well back under the saddle, and coming well before it, to the setting on of the neck, is a beauty in a horse, and in most cases it may be considered as indicative of a good shoulder; but this is by no means always the case. So a judge would look scrupulously to the shoulder itself, before he permitted himself to be guided by the wither in his estimation of the shoulder altogether; for it is quite possible

for a horse to have as fine a wither as ever was given to animal, still possessing a very indifferent, and, in some cases, a very bad shoulder. Some persons will, I am aware, be much astonished on seeing me assert that the wither *alone* has nothing at all to do with the shoulder. Before persons indicate their doubts or dissent on what I state, let me recommend them to look at the skeleton of a horse ; they will then see that the wither of the horse is composed merely of upright bones of greater or lesser height—in fact, is analogous to the chine of a pig. These bones spring from the vertebræ, and are, in point of fact, quite guiltless of any influence on the increased or diminished powers of speed or action in the animal. Many persons, I doubt not, imagine the wither to be the vertebræ of the horse, and a low or high one to proceed from how much or little those vertebræ are curved to form the arch the wither more or less exhibits. If this was the case, perhaps the motion or powers of the animal might be actuated by such curve : but the height or lowness of the wither is, as I have shown, totally irrespective of the spine, and

arising solely from the upright bones springing from it being longer or shorter, consequently have no more influence in themselves on the action of the shoulder beneath than has the tail, or any other part of the anatomy.

The beauty and goodness of a shoulder depend mainly on its obliquity: its action upon the general freedom of motion of the limb, and the not being incommoded by superabundance of flesh to impede its action. The want of the obliquity mentioned produces the straight shoulder, with which, though a horse may be a very good one in harness, he is very rarely safe or pleasant to ride, and I think I may say never speedy in his gallop.

Some persons think that a high wither indicates that such horse will carry his saddle in a handsome place. This is, however, not to be confided in. A horse may have a somewhat low wither, and still carry his saddle in the middle of his back; or he may have a very high one and always carry his saddle, in technical phrase, "on his shoulders." The place in which a horse carries his saddle depends on

the fulness of the muscles that run up to the wither, not the wither itself; and further, on how far back these muscles are carried. Thus it will be seen that any wither is high enough for such muscles to rest on. An unusually high wither is, as we may term it, greatly in the way; for, unless the muscles that sustain the saddle in its place are very full and go far back, such wither is continually getting galled. It is true, we may get a "cut-back" saddle, but they are hideous, and with a very high wither it has the appearance of, as it were, growing out of the pommel of the saddle. Many horses that have uncommonly high withers labour under the defect of the muscles of the shoulder running no higher up than the vertebræ of the horse's back—consequently, on each side of the wither is a hollow in which, in low phrase, "you might hide a hat." Such horses are usually inclined to be weak ones, thin between the legs, and consequently unpleasant to sit on; you have no grasp of them unless you are a second Tom Thumb. They are also commonly narrow in the chest: this, however, may be passed over, as

many such horses are very speedy, and, when tolerably big in the girth, are not objectionable; but, unfortunately, we rarely find them so.

I have heard many old horsemen, particularly huntsmen, say they liked their saddles placed tolerably forward on their horses, giving as a reason that it threw the weight on the strongest part of the animal. It does this, I admit; but they forget that it leaves a great portion of the chief sources of propelling motion, namely, the loins, gaskins, thighs, and hocks, comparatively unemployed, that is, not contributing their fair share of impulse to the going. We might, by parity of reasoning, load a waggon and throw three-fourths of the weight on the fore-wheels, as being the strongest. We do so; but it is the hind ones that are the long-lever and propellers, and we should find by the straining of the horses that we had apportioned the load contrary to reason and the rules of draught.

A huntsman's argument that he sat on the strongest part of his horse when riding as it were on his shoulders, might have some plausibility in it when he

mounted him before daybreak, and continued on his back till the afternoon ; but he would find his system anything but a good one in a twenty-five minutes' burst with hounds of the present day over a flying country. I can only say that personally I would not accept a present of a horse to ride that carried his saddle in a bad place, if the failing was irremediable.

There is another cause for a horse having this failing, irrespective of the want of muscle in the right place. This is from faulty form, the not carrying or keeping his girths in the proper place. I have seen horses whose girths were always close to the back of their fore legs. This arises sometimes from the fore legs being placed too far under the body, at others from the fault of the horse having, comparatively speaking, no brisket to keep them in the right place. This is to be palliated to a certain degree, which I will mention in my next article.

Thus I have shown that, though I admit they do "go in all forms," there are certain forms with which they cannot go pleasantly.

I have already stated two of the causes that

make some horses carry their saddle "on their shoulders." First, the want of resisting muscle in the right place. Where this is the case, the only remedy that I know of is one of the patent pad cloths: this consists of a small saddle-cloth, so cut as to be kept in its place by the wither, and a girth attached to them. The upper side (on which the saddle is placed) is covered either with some very coarse adhesive plaster, or a substance composed of wire, something like the cards used for carding wool or cloth; this being brought in contact with the pommel of the saddle, or rather the lining of it, from the substance with which it is made, holds the saddle in its place, and the resisting pad cannot itself get forward, being stopped by the wither above and the girths beneath. This will succeed with most horses, and I have frequently seen them used; but, personally, I never was unfortunate enough to purchase or own a horse that wanted one.

The only remedy that I know of for a horse's saddle getting forward from the want of brisket to keep the girths in their proper place, is having the

girth-strap—on which you chiefly rely for keeping the saddle in the best place in which, under such circumstances, it will remain—fixed under the points of the saddle. You can by no art or contrivance keep the girths in their place beneath, they *will* get close to the back of the horse's legs; all that can be done is, therefore, to prevent their going from the saddle obliquely forward, and thus having a tendency to draw it after them. By fixing one girth-strap on so forward a part of the saddle as the point, you gain several inches, and cause the girth to act horizontally; this will to a certain degree remedy the evil; but, as I said before, why keep a brute that is a continual annoyance? I have heard persons say, when speaking of a horse with radical faults or infirmities, "Oh, he's a favourite." It is, perhaps, lucky for the animal that he is so. But I should ask, How came he a favourite? An infirmity may come against a good horse; in such case, I "applaud with both hands" the kind and feeling master who bears with such failing rather than sell a favourite animal on the chance of his being ill-treated. But a horse with a

radical objection, such as I have named, becoming a favourite, is to me a perfect anomaly. The only way in which I can reasonably account for such a proceeding is, that the owner did not know his horse possessed it, till, in the words of the play, "some d——d good-natured friend" told him of it. It might not have been any great objection to the owner, who, probably (provided he sat somewhere between the head and tail of the beast), was indifferent where; and the animal having never shied, refused to go in the direction wanted, or tumbled on his nose, he might, with such an owner, have become a favourite.

Now if a horse could be found that in point of speed very far eclipsed Flying Childers, or the Flying Dutchman, could with perfect ease and certainty take timber seven feet high, and water thirty feet wide, so very uncommon and extraordinary an animal might well become a *favourite*, and might have many natural or acquired faults, that any man appreciating extraordinary performance would cheerfully put up with; but a mere common-place good horse, whether

hunter or used for other purposes, having any objectionable faults, I should, in dealer's phrase, "ship him" as soon as possible. There are many failings that a horse may have, that a man with a tolerable temper, and, above all, command of it, may be quite willing to put up with in one possessing in other respects very desirable attributes —for instance, pulling harder than is pleasant with hounds; being, as some are, impetuous when hounds first go off; being hasty at his fences, or, what to me is ten times worse, a little sluggish at them; being inclined to be a little vicious in the stable and out; all these faults may be borne if they cannot be remedied; but a naturally bad goer, a slow brute, or one, as I have said, carrying his saddle badly, I not only should not be surprised at any man's not bearing with, but should be astonished if he did. But, above all things, an uncertain-tempered horse is the worst—he is like an uncertain-tempered man, you are never safe with him; the first may, in one of his ill-humours, break your neck, the other may in the same case so conduct himself that you

must quarrel with him. As I said before, I have not so much dread of a horse a little impetuous at his fences as many persons. I have had very few falls from such horses, but from your phlegmatic gentlemen I have had many. With horses who are sometimes the one and sometimes the other, the only safe way I found out to ride such uncertain ones was always to ride them at their fences as if you expected them to be in one of their phlegmatic moods.

But I have been led away from my subject. I should think it must be a matter of surprise to every one, as it is to me, to see the numbers of persons we do, using horses for purposes to which they are neither by their shape or make, action, or other attributes, at all fitted. For instance, a horse carrying a saddle badly from formation, and partly from the same formation being inclined to lean forwards and downward in going, may have still good knee action. In this case his propensity to lean forward is a recommendation to him for harness; it draws the carriage after him. It is a well-known fact that a carthorse, unable to move a load, will often, if a couple of men

get on him and sit pretty close to his shoulders, move it directly. It is something like this with a horse leaning on the bit if ridden, and inclined (from make) to lean forward altogether. Such animal can by no possibility be pleasant to ride, but may be capital in harness, to which he should be kept. Now a horse "well on his haunches" is diametrically the reverse. He will, in a general way, be extremely pleasant to ride. But this will not be found advantageous to him in harness, but the reverse.

The being thus thrown on his haunches would affect him something like the two men I have instanced as sitting on the carthorse's back would affect him. If, instead of sitting as much as possible on his shoulders, they were to sit close to his tail, they would thus act prejudicially, rather than otherwise, to his efforts; they would weigh down his haunches, thus inclining his foreparts to elevate themselves. This is something similar to a horse being well on his haunches, and, consequently, anything but advantageous to his draught. It used to be a universal complaint that putting horses in harness spoiled them for saddle-horses, giving them an

inclination to lean forwards, as if still leaning on the collar. The objection was a correct one. In those days the roads were heavy, and if mended, were mended with loose gravel, that took a long time before it would bind and get to anything like a firm state; consequently, horses were obliged to thus lean forwards to get the load along.

Now, when coaching was in vogue, old riding-horses and hunters were constantly seen in coaches. Such horses did very well over light, flat, galloping ground; here their breed and blood told. But on hilly, heavy stages a very different animal was used and required; here a thick-shouldered, close-knit horse was necessary, one that would stick to his collar, lean to his work, and thus lug a coach up hill or through heavy ground.

Thus from what I have said I trust I have not shown, that I am so fastidious as to object to all horses that are not symmetrically made; I merely wish a horse to be so made, have such action and attributes, as fit him for the purpose for which he is intended.

PECULIARITY OF MAKE IN HORSES.

THERE are few more unsightly peculiarities in the horse's make than a low or hollow back; it is at all times objectionable in point of appearance, but in many cases I must consider it perfectly hideous. It may be hid in some degree by a very long saddle, with an unusually full-stuffed pommel, both of them very comfortable, both to horse and rider; indeed, unless you go to a first-rate hunting saddler, if you give an unconditional order for a saddle to be made, ten to one but you get one three inches too short, and with scarcely any stuffing, supposed to produce a neat appearance in the pannel. A thin pannel is necessary to a racing saddle, where ounces in point of weight are to be considered. Besides which, they have always one, sometimes more saddle-cloths be-

tween them and the horse's back ; and be it remembered a jockey is very often not over ten minutes on his horse from the time of saddling and mounting till he carries his saddle into the weighing-house. But with all this, horses that run often during the racing season often exhibit sore backs (and eke sometimes sore shins), that it is pitiable to see such good animals as many of our platers here exhibit. Many a time have I lent a silk handkerchief to form a protection to the withers of one of these. But enough of saddles.

Low-backed horses naturally give us an idea of weakness ; and I must confess I cannot divest myself of the idea that they are, in point of supporting strength, weaker than others, but not so much so as persons are led to imagine. We are aware that an arch is in itself a tower of strength, independent of any support it may have beneath. But take, we will say, a piece of timber, and be that perfectly straight, or bowed the reverse way to the arch, if it is in this case supported by brickwork or any other substance beneath, it becomes much stronger than the timber

would be, depending on its own individual strength, be it in what position it may. Thus if we depended on the strength of the vertebræ of the horse for our support, its being arched, running horizontally, or bowed downwards, would be a matter of vital importance; for I should say, figuratively speaking, the mere spine would not alone carry a tom cat. It is the supporting-ribs and muscles that constitute the strength of the back, and from where the ribs end we may be said to be supported by the muscles of the loins that continue beyond the last rib; but here the upper thigh bones lend their support; so that the spine is supported in its whole length by either bone or muscle, or rather by both conjointly. Thus it need not be a matter of as much surprise as it is to many to see some low-backed horses carrying men of considerable weight, seeing that, though the spine dips considerably, it is, in fact, as much supported by bone and muscle as if it ran horizontally or was arched. I admit it is not in itself individually as strong; but the support it receives renders it quite capable of performing its destined duty.

As some set-off to the objections to hollow-backed horses, they are mostly comfortable to sit on, easy in their movements, and in leaping the rider feels as if sitting on a swing or an easy seat. Horses rising in the spine, technically called "roach-backed ones," are the reverse. They are apt to be somewhat rough in their motions, and are frequently difficult to sit close on at their leaps. A horse remarkably strong across his loins, though an admitted merit, sometimes gives his rider such a cant when leaping, particularly at high jumps, that, unless he sits well back and prepares himself for the shock, he would find himself most unpleasantly forward, if not off. I had one who not only did this, but would sometimes, when fresh, jump half as high again as was necessary. I forgave him this, knowing that, however high or wide the leap might be, he was sure to go high and wide enough for it; figuratively speaking, there appeared to be no limit to his powers. I have often regretted since, I never tried how high or wide he could jump.

From what I have said of hollow-backed horses,

it is quite clear I would not purchase one or buy him for a friend; but for a woman I hold a somewhat low-backed horse not to be objectionable—in fact, far preferable to one with the spine unusually elevated. In the first place, the appearance of a low back is (supposing a horse to cary his saddle where he ought to do) nearly hidden by the length of a properly-made lady's saddle. As I before stated, the easiness of all the motions of such horses is a great desideratum to a female, whose attributes as a gentlewoman are not those of a female rough-rider, who may perhaps with truth assert she can ride *anything*. A lady should be composed and gentle on horseback as we wish to see her in all situations in life. Let her be as perfect, and still more as elegant, a horse-woman as the best instruction can make her; but do not give her a horse that, by make, gait, or disposition, would mar her proficiency.

I should say ladies who ride much on horseback seldom get on their saddle at a weight exceeding nine stone seven, or at most ten stone, consequently they ride, with an eighteen-pound saddle, at most,

eleven stone eight. Supposing, therefore, a hollow-backed horse not to be able to carry the same weight as others, he must be a very weak one indeed, and, consequently totally unfit to carry a woman, if with her riding, either with hounds or on the road, he is at all incommoded by such weight; in fact, a lady's horse should always be able to carry a stone or two above the weight she rides; this keeps him always fresh, and above his work, on which circumstance his pleasantness and safety in carrying her mainly depends.

I have still another plea, in fairness, to bring forward in favour of low-backed horses, or rather, to mitigate the sweeping objections entertained against them by most men (myself for one). I have remarked low backs to be less likely to get sore than those of which the spine is more elevated. I allude to the part under the saddle; low-backed horses usually have the muscles of the back running higher up to the spine than others. I have seen them, when fat, have these muscles so high and prominent, that the spine bone was actually below them, or, at all

events, not higher. A horse with an elevated spine requires his saddle to be stuffed unusually full, so as to prevent the seat of the saddle resting on it. Persons may say that the part of a saddle over the spine consists only of the lining and pig's-skin above it. Granted; but these are quite enough to chafe when the pores of the skin are in a state of perspiration—independent of which, it is not very pleasant to the rider to feel the back as it were like the edge of a board beneath his seat, which will be the case unless the saddle is stuffed purposely for the particular horse.

Low-backed horses, as an objection (at least one in my eyes), are apt to show a little exuberance of carcase: in fact, the body, being lower than usual (from peculiarity of make above), becomes naturally more pendant below: thus, supposing a low-backed horse to have the same length of rib as another, and the abdominal muscles in proportion, they must give him the appearance of a more dropping carcase than other horses. Whether on actual measurement this might prove to be the case or not (for in low-backed

ones the spine usually only dips behind the wither), the measurement from the wither to the bottom of the brisket will be found pretty much the same as with other horses. Now, in my opinion, the beauty of the brisket of a horse consists in its running upwards from the back of the fore-legs about a foot or more. Here is the proper place for the girths ; from these the body should fall a little, to form a proper and handsomely-proportioned carcase. A good carcase is handsome, and desirable in a horse ; but this is not belly, which can only be tolerated in a cart-horse, and he looks infinitely better the less he has of it. I do not say that low-backed horses actually have this monstrous objection ; I merely state they are apt to have the appearance of it.

PECULIARITY OF FORM.

LARGE-CARCASED HORSES.

Whenever I venture an opinion on any subject, I neither do so as considering it incontrovertibly right, or presuming to think others will hold it as such: in fact, it will be admitted I at all times candidly state what I conceive may be brought forward antagonistical to my view of the case. My readers can thus draw their own conclusions from what is said on either side.

In the spirit of such feeling of what is fair and proper, I will state certain opinions that are quite at variance with my own; but at the same time I must, in justice to myself, premise they were opinions current before I was born, and refuted and shown to be fallacious very soon afterwards. There were scores

of low sayings among grooms and such persons showing the favourable opinions entertained by them in favour of horses carrying large carcases—and, in sooth, such opinions were also entertained by many who, had they exercised their reasoning power, would have seen how erroneous such predilection was. "I like a horse that gives me something to kick against." "He's the right sort; he carries his bread and cheese cupboard with him." "I like a horse that, if you feed him well, brings some of it home again." Sundry such sayings seemed to imply that people wished a horse to carry a store of food in his stomach, as the camel does water—which, though a great advantage to the animal, and sometimes even to his master if crossing the desert of Bilma, would be anything but a desirable attribute in a horse crossing Ashby pastures.

How far this said carrying "his bread and cheese" with him, as a store, might serve a horse when hunters, like day-labourers, began their work at six in the morning, and finished at six at night, or when, at all events, nine hours was but an average time for a day's fox-hunting, I am not prepared to say:

rarely, if ever—thank the sylvan deities!—having taxed my horse's powers of endurance, or my own patience, to such extent. Many persons have, of course, heard of hounds being at the covert-side by daybreak, and, from what they judge of the time occupied in killing a fox who flies from his kennel at eleven, they possibly conclude our ancestors had got their work or sport over by what we hold to be breakfast hour. No such thing. Foxes were rarely in those days run into; they were hunted till the endurance of the united pack, relieving each other, out-lasted that of the fox single-handed, who, prior to being come up with, might oftentimes be seen hardly able to raise a trot. Now we run into him often when going something bordering on twenty miles an hour. Where would be the "bread-and-cheese" carriers on such occasions? I am not prepared to say but that a pot of porter, and something like a pound of beef-steak, would, to a cormorant who could take them, as he probably would say, "stand by him," if he was obliged to walk thirty miles at the rate of three miles an hour. But

Charley Westall would find them lie something heavy on the stomach, in doing the same distance at the rate of six miles and a half in the hour, or more.

Nothing can be a greater mistake than concluding that a horse's having a protuberant carcase is proof of the goodness of his constitution, of his hardihood, or of his capability of enduring work. I would only ask, if a postman was wanted, a porter, a messenger, or, in fact, any man that required the slightest activity, would any one select a little or big pot-bellied fellow to do the work? The inference to be drawn on such a man presenting himself would naturally be that he had never been employed in such work, or that he was incapable of doing it. Had he been so engaged, the pot-belly would soon have disappeared. We do not usually see letter-carriers in such a state.

I have heard many men say "they detested a horse showing a middle-piece like a shotten herring." So do I; but this is even preferable (to carry on the simile) to a horse with a belly like a herring filled with roe to his very throat.

I am no advocate for "drawing horses over fine," even as racehorses, though some of the old ones cannot live the lengths they have to go unless they are so. There is no occasion whatever for a hunter to be in the same state as a racehorse when brought to the post; but look at a fair-constitutioned racehorse six weeks before, when in regular work, but not the severest he will have to encounter, I should say he was about in the condition and state a hunter should be, intended to cross a fast country. You will find his crest firm to the touch, his muscles just developed and springing beneath the hand if pressed from shoulder to flank, his carcase nicely rounded, neither showing like the shotten or the over-loaded herring. A favourite term with grooms of late years is, "a carcase as straight as a gun-barrel." It is well if a horse towards the end of a season shows this; but, to begin with, I should like a slight deviation from the straight line, and will allow a little handsome fall behind the girths; but this must depend on the natural tendency of a horse as to form, and many very light-carcased ones can go through as much

work, and take their turn with their more robust-looking partners. I will here, for instance, state that no power on earth could make me carry carcase. From habit, I believe I eat and drink less than one man in twenty, yet few men have undergone severer bodily exertion in every way. I am not, therefore, so much alarmed at "shy-feeders" as many persons are. I have rarely found your gluttons (and consequently horses that show they are such) brilliant performers. Carcase and paunch are quite different things; a horse having a good carcase from having long back ribs, and not an undue space between the last rib and his hip-bone, I grant indicates strength. This is bone and muscle, not distended abdomen, in fact, entrails. I have said a horse should not have an undue space between his last rib and his hip-bone; but let me observe, he should not be what is still more objectionable—too short in this particular, that is, too much "tied up." A horse so formed may (like one narrow across the hips) look very level and pretty, and, for a mere park hack, neither are objectionable; but a hunter, or any horse

destined to great feats, wants good wide hips—if somewhat protuberant no matter—he also wants good space to work them in. There is a vast difference between pretty horses and handsome ones. I have seen many beautiful ones very distinguished on the turf and in the field, but they were beautiful from symmetry and proportion. It is quite possible for a horse to be merely pretty without possessing either in any eminent degree.

I have remarked long, or, in more common terms, deep back ribs, as a perfection and proof of strength. I am not aware that a long rib is a bit stronger than a short one; but the former has the advantage of additional corresponding muscle supporting it—hence, I conceive, its strength. Many first-rate racehorses are in this particular very deficient—in fact, made like a greyhound. Bay Middleton was one, yet "he could go;" nor for the Derby length, or that of some of the good things in racing now in vogue, does it matter; for a horse must be a wretch indeed that found his back ache in carrying about eight stone for a mile and a half. But the hunter has to carry on an

average say twelve stone, and that for several hours: consequently a good strong back and body are indispensable in his case, but he wants little more absolute belly than does the racehorse.

In a future article I will endeavour to point out the origin and causes of overgrown carcases; for, as I will also endeavour to show, they are not natural to the horse, or, indeed, any quadruped.

There can be no doubt that domestication and art have in many particulars improved the breed of most animals under the care of man. It has also improved in many respects their capabilities, as regards their utility to ourselves; but I am by no means certain but our treatment renders some animals less useful to themselves.

BIG HEADS ON HORSES.

We must all agree that a neat, light, deer-like head is a beauty in the horse, indicative, to a certain degree, that he will ride pleasantly and light in hand. Some persons go so far as to consider it almost

borders on insuring goodness. "A good head" is one thing: a merely small head is quite another. No horses of their size have smaller heads than those superlative brutes of brutes we see in mourning coaches. Who the breeders can be, or why such ill-shaped masses of animated flesh should be bred at all, is only to be accounted for by concluding the numbers employed in their particular vocation in this large metropolis, carries off all that (let us hope) are bred. The Belgian cart-horses have remarkably small heads comparatively with those indigenous to England, and smaller still comparatively with their enormous bodies. Most of the French post and diligence horses have smaller heads than ours; but they, though good horses, are by no means better, or I might say so good as our own. Small ears, and those somewhat pricked (that is, very close together) at the points, are a marked feature in German horses. I do not remember that in my life I ever met with a very pricked-eared horse a good one; certainly not a racehorse or hunter.

Persons are apt to imagine a small head shows

breeding, as indicative of an approach—or rather, in technical phrase, "a hark back"—to the Arabian blood from which thorough-bred horses usually spring. This is all quite correct, but it must be borne in mind that horses have a dam as well as a sire. The dam, granddam, or great granddam, go back as far as you like, was, in ninety-nine cases in a hundred, purely English. From her the horse derives his peculiarities, as well as from the sire; consequently suppose the dam happens to have a large head, and the sire one peculiarly Arab-like, the progeny is quite likely to show nothing in point of head of the ancestry from which he sprang. Therefore, though a deer-like head is taking, and even biasses opinion and predilection, a large head in no way indicates any want of breeding. We will instance the Belzonis: they were all remarkable for large heads. Here a large head was a proof of a horse being well bred, for it characterised him as being a Belzoni. No horse's stock was in greater demand or repute as hunters than were Belzoni's. We must admit this sire was not pre-eminent in his racing career. This

says nothing; he was well-bred enough to have been so, in spite of his big head.

Persons on seeing a horse with a large head are sometimes led to remark (if he is a riding horse), "I should not like to carry that big head of his at the end of my bridle." No one would; but it by no means follows you would be required to do so, for probably he would carry it himself, and that just as lightly and pleasantly to the rider as the smallest head that could be seen. A horse carrying his head as we wish, depends chiefly on three things—that head well put on, a nice yielding neck, and a good mouth. Let a horse have these recommendations, and be his head, in burlesque language, as big as a coal-scuttle, he will carry it with satisfaction to his rider; whereas, on the contrary, I have seen many horses with a beautiful small head and a nose that, technically speaking, you could "put in a quart pot," that had no more mouth than the ordinary run of asses, and, moreover, could pull like a locomotive. Jockies will bear me out in this assertion.

I am quite free to admit a large head is a distaste-

ful and unfortunate addition to the anatomy of the horse; so it is to that of the man; but it would be injudicious to irrevocably reject the one, as it would be illiberal to take a confirmed dislike to the other. Now countenance is a very different affair, in man or beast; but I am compelled to candidly confess that I never saw a countenance in man or horse that said, as plain as countenance can speak, "I mean harm," but I always found its owner keep his word. Let not the reader think me wild or visionary in my ideas as to countenance; I am quite assured he will find me right, in a general way. There is something in a good head and good countenance in a horse that speaks volumes. A fine clear eye that looks directly at you, an indescribable goodness in the head, altogether very different from the suspicious and sinister look we see in some horses (and eke in some men), that puts you on your guard against them.

A very marked feature in some horses (I have observed it particularly in those of Ireland, who are not signalised for good temper) is a very flat forehead between the eyes. Nothing gives a more forbidding

appearance to the countenance. I know not why it is, but such horses have usually small sinister-looking eyes, with contracted brows ; while, on the other hand, horses with full or projecting foreheads will be mostly found to have a generous, full, and fearless eye, that seems to court rather than evade scrutiny. Such should be the eye of man, seeming to say, "Look into the recesses of my mind, you will find nothing there I am ashamed of." I love such a man, and I carry my predilection towards such a horse ; though we must not infer in such case the mind has much or anything to do with the circumstance ; but I cannot but feel assured the disposition has. Both were born with the animal. Kindness, determination, and treatment, will go a long way to correct bad disposition and propensities in the animal. I fear, though we may correct or counteract bad habits in the man, we must not be so sanguine as to disposition.

Some horses have wicked, roguish eyes, that say plainly, "I will play some roguish trick if I get a chance. "We have only to guard against any pranks

such animals may attempt to perform ; these may be troublesome, or sometimes dangerous, but far different to those of the radically bad-disposed animal, who, when we least expect it, makes serious reprisals for the period in which he has gained our confidence, in a disposition in which no confidence can with safety be placed.

I had one of these forbidding-countenanced ones. Had he been a man, and a murder had been committed, you would have been tempted to say, "That is the man who did it ; or, at all events, his countenance indicates him capable of the act." So by this horse. I was tempted by his general good looks and action ; but I did not like his countenance. I asked if he was good-tempered. His owner (I dare say with truth) said he had never seen anything to the contrary. I got him home, and for many weeks saw nothing I could find fault with. Still I remarked he always kept his eye, as it were, surreptitiously on the man attending him, as if making sure of his point ere he attempted mischief. I was quite sure he was at heart a savage. Some time after, when hunting,

he put his two forefeet in a stone hole on the top of a bank. As he had come a good pace to the leap, the consequence was we both rolled over into the next field. He was up a second or so before me, and rushed at me open-mouthed; but, on my getting on my legs, he stopped. No doubt, had I remained prostrate, he would have *savaged* me. I never liked a bad countenance before this, but I then resolved I would never buy another; and I have kept my word.

SMALL FEET.

I am not surprised at anyone being struck aghast at the bare mention of small feet as regards the horse; for with them is associated the idea of contracted heels, with the frequent accompaniments to such feet—corns, thrushes, chronic lameness, internal inflammation, navicular disease, and a long category of ills that feet are heirs to.

But here let me observe that persons are apt to be too apprehensive of mere *small* feet, for let me re-

mark they may be very *sound* ones, nor at all indicative of, or the result of, any of the diseases I have mentioned, or of others equally to be dreaded. The mule and the ass have both peculiarly-formed feet. A horse being mule-footed conveys at once the idea of what his feet are like, nor to those conversant with such matters does it convey any idea causing a decided rejection. The Arab has usually mule-like feet; yet I should be inclined to say the Arabs were particularly sound as to feet. I am the more emboldened to state such opinion from the following circumstance.

Some years ago, a friend of mine wrote to me requesting me to purchase a couple of racehorses to run in India. His letter ran thus: "You know as well as I can tell you the kind of horse to run with success chiefly against Arabs or horses bred here, where they run what your English racing ideas consider long distances, and that at high weights. All I tie you to is, they must have *feet of cast iron* to stand the ground we have to train on."

This, coming from a man accustomed to keep race-

horses in England, I think, proves far more than any opinion of mine, that Eastern horses, though owning small feet, must usually have sound ones; for I never heard that foot-lameness was prevalent with them.

Persons not judges of the matter may, perhaps, act judiciously in rejecting at once a horse with tendency to small feet; that is, if they intend to purchase on the somewhat precarious test of their own opinion and judgment. But the difference is so great between a small foot and a contracted one, that I should consider a mere glance at either sufficient to satisfy the opinion of any man possessing any knowledge of the matter. Size has, in a general way, little to do with contracted feet; a horse may have a foot as big as a dinner-plate, and still have what we call a contracted foot; whereas, to further make use of the dinner-service figuratively, he may have a foot as small as a butter-boat (that is, supposing it to be the old-fashioned one of an oblong square), and have no tendency to a contracted foot—in such case he would be mule-footed, but with the heels

showing open and wide. It is but rarely we find a horse with his foot contracted altogether, for in such case some internal chronic disease must have long existed that would have rendered the animal more or less lame. But contracted *heels* are a disease of daily occurrence, and these a horse may have, though his foot may be large to unsightliness. Persons are apt to imagine that the lameness incident to contracted feet arises from the wall of the foot pressing upon the sensible portion inside it. This eventually may possibly be the case; but, supposing it to be so, it is the internal parts of the foot withering from some disease that causes the crust of the heels to follow. Let the internal foot retain all its juices, vitality, and consequent size, to support the heels and keep them expanded, the heels would of themselves have no tendency to contract. It is not, therefore, the heels that are the offending party, but the internal part the unfortunate one.

Persons on seeing a horse with a narrow foot, whether contracted or not, are apt to set it down invariably as arising from the effects of bad shoeing.

That it in very many cases arises from improper treatment of the feet is quite certain; but it is not the actual shoe we must blame for ill consequences, but the improper paring the foot in wrong places, that produces the mischief when any arises. The shoe has little to do with the matter, that is, with narrow heels; for, be it remembered, the nails do not, or at least should not, come far back enough to confine the heels. It may be said: "But the nails confine the sides of the foot." This I admit they do; but a horse's foot is not made of strong wood like a box, so that, if the sides are nailed tight, the extreme ends are equally confined; but, if that box was made of wood thin enough to be yielding, though you nailed the sides of a certain way as firmly as you wish, the ends would be capable of expansion to a certain point. So I conceive it to be with the foot of the horse. The wall or crust is, to a certain degree, of a yielding substance, so that, although we may confine the toe and sides by nailing, the heel has room enough to expand if it has a tendency to do so, or, at all events, to retain its natural width, while

the internal part of the foot is able to support it, and is not weakened by injudicious use of the drawing-knife, or, worse still, that of the buttress—a tool now nearly exploded from all but quite country shoeing-forges, where the practice is chiefly among cart-horses.

Having, I hope, from what I have said, in some degree rescued my friends the shoeing smiths from the indiscriminate blame thrown on them as accessaries to every species of contracted feet, let us see if we cannot find some one or something more meriting our accusations. So long as men ride horses on made roads properly or improperly, or so long as they ride them in other situations, calling on them for exertion for which we have no reason to suppose nature ever intended them, so long will the animal be subject to diseases unknown to him in a state of nature; among these, those incidental to the feet is one, and I think I may say the most prevalent. Internal diseases often do not lame perceptibly for a long time after their incipient existence. Horses will often become, to a certain degree, even absolutely

lame, without its progress being detected, until it is, comparatively speaking, too late; in all probability internal fever in the foot has long existed, sapping and drying up its vitality, till, in figurative comparison, it is like the withered kernel of the nut, with this difference: the nut is surrounded by a hard shell capable of retaining its original form without support from the inside, whereas the foot of the horse is not, and consequently follows the gradual diminution of the internal fabric.

Shoes have been made with a tendency to (as it were) force open or widen the heels; such shoes, if they fulfilled the promises made for them (which, with the weight of a horse on them, I very much doubt) would be proper enough as an *adjunct:* but the use of them was beginning "at the wrong end of the stick." First endeavour to remove or palliate the cause of contraction of the feet, viz., internal fever and consequent disease; endeavour to restore vitality, and get, if possible, the wholesome juices of the foot to animate its dried and withered state; then, indeed, an expanding shoe, in addition

to our other efforts, may be of some use. But it must be clear that, supposing we could force the crust and heels back to their original formation, unless we could so cure the disease as to give the internal sensible part of the foot a disposition or capability of expanding also, the forcing open the heels would incurably lame the horse. Various have been the inventions to cure the dire disease of contracted feet; various the tortures the animal has been put to with the same intent—all of which, in a general way, have lamentably failed.

I may have occasion again to touch on this complaint, and the modes employed to endeavour to remedy it; and in mentioning so far as I have its fatal effects, I have done so to show my readers that I am quite aware of the serious consequences of contracted feet, so am, perhaps, one of the last men to underrate anything bordering on such malady; and, knowing what I do of the disease, though I do not object to a naturally small foot, I have as great a horror as man can have of a contracted one.

CONTRACTED FEET.

As I before stated, the great mistake persons make as regards contracted feet, arises from their not attributing their existence to the right cause. To reason by analogy, we see a man walking apparently in great pain, arising from gout, or some other painful affection of the feet. We might be tempted to attribute this to the tightness of the shoe pressing on the foot: this may possibly be the case, if he has inadvertently put on a pair too tight for him; but the narrowness of the shoe is not the origin of the disease, nor has it brought it on; to show the validity of this remark, take off the tight shoes, he will of course walk with more ease; but substitute an easy pair of list slippers, he would still be a cripple. So it is with the horse: could we enlarge the crust of the foot till the internal part of it would be like a cricket-ball in a hat, the horse would still be lame. In one respect I admit my analogy of the gouty man in tight shoes fails to represent the horse with contracted feet: the shoe worn by the

man might be perchance abundantly too small for the ailing foot, not being a part of it; but the crust of the horse's feet only follows the shrinking of the internal part, consequently we have no reason to suppose they press more on it than when the whole foot was in its original form. I should say, in either case the rational mode of proceeding would be to cure or palliate the gout in the man, do the same by whatever disease affects the internal part of the horse's foot; they will both then in time go comparatively sound, if not quite so.

To the same mistake as regards the origin of contracted feet may be attributed the various impotent contrivances for curing them. You would not now see Mr. Field or any other veterinary surgeon of eminence cutting nearly through the wall of the foot perpendicularly from the coronet to the base; yet this was a favourite old practice. These slashed took nearly twelve months to grow out; the horse was turned to grass great part of the time; his corn was stopped, and he got perfect rest. If at the end of the twelve months he came up sound or com-

paratively so, the farrier, for we will call him nothing else, rejoiced in his performance, and was thought, as Pat would say, "a great man entirely." The absolute rest for so long a period, possibly a dose or two of physic, and the cool moisture, to a great degree allaying the fevered ailment of the foot, produced the change the practitioner boasted of having effected. I am not prepared to say but that the cutting through the crust of the foot, rude and unnecessary as was the operation, might not aid the return of the foot to its natural size; for, if fever had contracted it and caused it to shrink, so a return, or partial return, to a healthy state would cause a disposition to expand; and this slashing practice enabled it to do so simply by weakening the crust—an effect to be produced by a far neater and more scientific process, namely, rasping the wall or crust till it manifests the required yielding property, so as not to militate against any efforts nature, aided by art, might make towards a reinstatement of the foot to its original health and size.

There are three symptoms by which we may judge

of something wrong existing in the internal foot—the horse going lame, showing indication of pain, or outward appearance; and here let me observe there are diseases that may neither lame, subject the animal to pain, nor alter the outward appearance of the foot, and yet be going on. Of course in such case we are, and must be, in the dark; for it is quite clear that while no symptom of disease appears, no remedy would be applied; nor even when lameness, or manifestation of pain, challenge our attention, can we at all times come to a definitive conclusion as to the exact cause of the ailment. It is thus where the operation of neurotomy (or, in common term, nerving) has been performed; it stops all lameness from pain, or even the sensation of pain felt by the animal; but in very many cases the disease continues its insidious course, till a small blow from any obstacle on the road causes the horse to cast off his entire hoof, as we might a slipper. Thus it will be seen that, though the internal part of the foot withers and loses its vitality, it does not invariably follow that the crust diminishes in accord-

ance with it; thus a horse may have apparently a sound and healthy-looking foot, yet be the unfortunate owner of a very diseased one.

There are, however, two sure signs of disease existing, though it may not have arrived at such pitch as to cause alteration in the outward form of the foot. These are—alteration in gait, when not amounting to absolute lameness, and the horse resting first one leg, then the other, showing evident uneasiness. Now it perhaps may happen that the horse has, in stable language, "a favourite leg,"—that is, he is always favouring one by putting it forward, so as to take all weight of the body off it. Grooms, dealers, and many owners will tell you "It is a trick of his," or "a way he has;" and many persons, whether the owner or not, are quite satisfied that it is so. Let me advise my reader to believe no such thing: a sound horse stands firm and straight on his legs; those that do not are more or less lame ones, or, at all events, something is going on that will in time render them so. Again, horses are often seen, *in* the stable and *out*, holding

perhaps, alternately, a foot completely off the ground ; such horse is not only in pain, but in agony. True, the whip may force him to go, and if both legs or (far more probably) feet are afflicted alike, he may not apparently go lame,—that is, he will not go unequally like the horse lame only with one. But how does the poor animal go? Why, like a man shuffling along with a pair of slippers down at heel. In this way he may be made to do the work of a sound one, supposing his master to be devoid of every feeling of humanity that should influence the acts of man. A horse, when he has come to this state, is beyond cure, probably beyond the reach of palliation. Here is a proper subject for the operation of nerving ; for though, as I have before stated, it does not stop the disease, it may enable the horse (being relieved from pain) to go on with his work probably for some years. For, if the complaint he labours under lames, from the pain it occasions only, it is quite clear if we relieve the pain we relieve the lameness, though not the disease. It is very true that in occult disease we must in some cases trust to

chance when we nerve the horse, as to whether the disease is one only causing lameness from the pain it creates, or whether it is one that will eventually undermine the whole fabric of the foot, in which case, as I have stated, it is possible the horse may in progress of time lose his hoof. Even in such case, he will probably have worked as long without pain as the greatest inhumanity could have made him do with; and as losing the hoof is a *possible* circumstance, so it is a rare one, and should not deter us from having recourse to neurotomy, when less desperate remedies have failed, and we find the animal reduced to the state of agonising pain I have described; for there must be a limit to the exertion he is capable of under such suffering—a period that stops the services of the horse, and is a very inadequate punishment to any owner who could be guilty of the inhumanity of using an animal in such a state.

LARGE FEET.

I of course mention these in contra-distinction to small feet, the subject of the two last articles. As I have attempted to show that small feet are by no means always to be held as indicative of ailing ones, so must large feet not be regarded as proof of being sound ones, for, as I have remarked, the heels of such feet are just as subject to contraction as those of the naturally narrowest foot that can be seen on a horse. Personally, I have an antipathy to large feet; and, owning this, that my prejudice may not influence others, let us look to the advantages, and their reverse, that pro and con arise to the horse from this peculiarity.

On the principle that snow-shoes enable a man to walk on snow, when with ordinary ones he would sink in, persons are apt to come to the conclusion that large feet are highly advantageous to the horse's progress on soft and yielding ground. There can be no doubt but that, to a certain degree, and that a very small one, the advantage of an extended surface

meeting the ground is a consideration, but, as I state, a very inconsiderable one; for, referring to the analogy of the snow-shoes, be it borne in mind they are perhaps about five times the width of a natural foot, or rather a made shoe; so the resistance they offer to sinking in on any yielding surface would be great to the man; but in the case of the horse, an extended surface of three quarters of an inch on each side makes the difference between a very small foot and a very large one in the riding horse. I leave it, therefore, to my readers to judge how far an inch and a half of opposing surface can be efficacious in preventing the weight of a horse sinking into soft ground; it would barely be perceptible in the case of a man. I must, therefore, with deference, differ from those who consider large feet as advantageous on the snow-shoe system. Allowing some advantage to be gained in this respect, it is so infinitesimally minute as to be hardly worth mentioning, and, in my opinion, not at all worth consideration.

Such ideal advantage is the only one I ever heard brought forward in favour of large feet; and even

this falls to the ground altogether in the case of horses used on the road only. To the racehorse they would be objectionable in effect and odious in appearance; he rarely goes on soft ground, and if he did, with the force with which he goes, I will venture to say the footprint of a large or ordinary-sized foot would not (so far as sinking in goes) be perceptible to the eye any more than any advantageous difference would be felt by the animal.

Let us now look to the hunter, the only horse with whom the anti-sinking effects of a large foot could be advantageous. I think I have stated how far this goes; against this we have several objections. We will pass over appearance; for, as regards the hunter, he is the only horse (save the racehorse) in whom and about whom we regard looks as a secondary object. Be it recollected a large foot requires a large shoe, and, though the specific gravity of the foot itself is something, it is not a matter of consideration; but the difference of weight in shoes is very considerable. Persons may say that a foot an inch or two wider than another only requires a shoe an inch

or two larger. This is true as regards circumference ; but a large foot requires a proportionable degree of what is technically called "cover," that is, a shoe made wide, so as to cover a certain portion of the sole of the foot. This, with the additional circumference together, makes the shoe very considerably heavier than one for an ordinary foot. Those who have taken off a heavy shoe and put on a light one, may judge of the effect of weight attached to the feet, and can therefore readily consider the impediment a heavy shoe is to a galloping horse. The difference in point of weight between a very heavy shoe and a light one amounts very nearly to that between an ordinary hunting shoe and the plate of the race-horse. Nor is it enough in very many cases that the shoe for the large foot is made to afford proportionate cover to the sole with that of the small one. Large feet are apt to be more or less flat ones. That is the very reverse of the mule foot. Flat feet again are apt to be thin in the sole ; hence why such feet require more than proportionate covering. The sole of the ordinary, or somewhat mule foot is not only

usually stronger, but is, to a certsin degree, arched from the ground, and consequently less subject to bruises from round stones, or cuts from flinty ones.

But this arched sole, when compared with the flat one, has another advantage. It is quite certain that the support of the weight of the horse must ultimately end in the feet: this is divided between the internal parts of the foot and the outward crust or wall. Without entering into any lengthened pathological definition of how one part presses on and is supported by another, it is quite clear a portion of the ultimate pressure goes on to the sole; and I think it is equally certain that the sole somewhat arched is capable of sustaining with impunity a weight the wider and flatter feet or sole could not, without yielding to its influence. I have seen large thin feet with the sole actually pressed down till they had become to a certain degree convex; this cannot last—the horse must, in the nature of things, become incurably lame and decrepit.

I do not remember ever to have seen but one race-horse with unsightly large feet; this was brother to

Gilbert Gurney; he could not, as it is termed, "run a yard." He was to be sold, and, being a particularly close-made and powerful horse, I pointed him out to a friend of mine as one likely to carry his welter weight as a hunter; he liked the horse, but his big feet were a choker. "My good fellow," said he to me, "it is quite enough for any horse to have to carry my weight on his back, without having to move a pair of feet each a stone and a half, with a hundred weight of iron attached to them."

My father had for many years a big-footed one, a good horse, and very perfect leaper, as regards safety; but his gallop was like that of the chargers we see in old prints in *fêtes* and tournaments. He jumped in a slovenly manner; his trot was laboured, heavy, and slow; his walk the same; it seemed as if his great feet militated against any activity. It was only astonishing how he lived with hounds, but he did; and though never in the van, always contrived to be "there or thereabouts." I held him a most superlative brute.

I have known many horses with large feet good

goers, and some of them fast; but I never saw one do anything neatly: like my father's horse, they thunder and blunder along somehow. But a horse, in my idea, to be what he ought to be, should in all his paces and in leaping induce you to mislead yourself by the idea that he was going on an India-rubber surface. It is the elastic movements of horses that render their motions pleasant, or the reverse. Many horses will, by sheer effort and strength, clear large leaps; but you can always feel when this is the case that brute force is alone employed. You feel the effort, and also feel aware that it is a severe trial of the powers of the animal; while, on the other hand, some horses have an elasticity somewhere that gives you the idea of their taking off from a spring board. These are the leapers for me; that when they have once taken off, figuratively speaking, make you wonder where, when, or if ever, you will come to the earth again. I need scarcely say such are not your big-footed ones.

CURBY-HOCKED HORSES.

Many, indeed perhaps most persons, on reading the heading of this article will conclude that by curby-hocked horses are meant those labouring under the direct presence of curbs. It is not so, however. "Curby-hocked," or, in more technical phrase, "sickle-hocked" horses alludes to those having their hocks so shaped as in a mitigated degree to resemble a sickle with its bowed part standing out behind them. Straight hocks are usually held as objectionable; not as indicating any predisposition to ailment, but I conceive they militate against a horse's spring in jumping, and I can but fancy horses possessing them do not go as well up-hill as others. Now, the curby or sickle-hocked horse shows that his hocks are not so formed as to be able to endure the strain or stress thrown on them by severe galloping, or a frequent occurrence of severe leaps. Whatever deviates much from the proper and natural line, will be always found to be to a certain degree weakened by it. It is thus with the hocks. If that part of the anatomy of

the horse stands well, we shall find that if we drop a plummet from the back of the hock, and let it touch the ground, the back part of the leg, just above the pastern, will be very nearly (sometimes quite) on a level with the hock. When it reaches far from it, the hock is exposed to undue pressure on the ligatures and bones forming the joint. We frequently hear of a horse having his hocks "well under him;" they should be so; but that should arise from the formation of the thigh, not from the legs standing unduly beneath his body, while the hocks protrude as unduly behind him—he then becomes sickle-hocked. But from whatever cause curbs may occur, they are a most objectionable complaint in a horse; we must be, therefore, very wrong, or very inadvertent, to purchase an animal with hocks indicative of predisposition, or, in better terms, showing more than usual liability to their occurring. In some proof of which, a friend of mine bought a young horse at a highish figure: he showed him to me, and, as friends are apt to do, asked my opinion of his bargain. "I must first know what you gave

before I can form an opinion on the subject; with his figure and looks, if I saw no radical objection to him, I should say, that even with the little practice you say he has had hunting, he would be worth a hundred; but I would not have bought a horse with such hocks, except at a very reduced price—they must give way when he comes into strong work."

For a month my friend rode him, and bantered me no little on the opinion I had given of his horse, till after a day's hunting his groom found, on dressing the horse, a very promising young curb on one of his hocks, and on leading the horse out, found him lame on that leg, and a little stiffish on the other—strong symptoms of a companion curb in prospective. He, however, took the wisest plan, by sending the horse to be fired on both hocks. Here was a little practical experience for my friend. I will be bound to say he never purchased a horse again without closely examining his hocks.

I have heard many Leicestershire grooms profess to hold curbs in very light consideration. I have heard some country farriers express the same opi-

nion ; the first will tell you, "Oh, we never stop a horse for curbs in the middle of a season, unless he gets very lame with them." The appropriateness of these two opinions amounts to about this : the first, in order to please their master, keep the horse going for a time by the application of stimulants ; and the master is insane enough, in many instances, for the sake of riding a horse on for a few weeks, to bring him into a state where the chances are he will never be able to ride him again with comfort. The farrier thinks little of curbs, because, if employed, he makes a dozen furrows (for furrows they represent) in the case of an incipient curb, where, probably, a mere blister would have sufficed. Let no man trifle with a curb. If taken in time, it usually yields to mild remedies ; but if the horse is used after, or particularly if used after he is lame on it, from the circumstance of his going sound when he has "been out a bit," the chances are, a lame one he will eventually be, in spite of all invented remedies.

Curbs and spavins, though both taking place on the hock, are by no means to be considered in any

way as analogous to each other; at least, I hold them as quite different. The curb may arise from an infinity of circumstances, though all more or less of the same nature, namely, strain—and usually sudden strain; its existence usually shows immediately. Now the spavin, which in a general way (though not always) is the worst disease, is one of slow growth; hence I infer it is more produced from continued hard work than from strain, like the curb. In some proof of which, curbs are very common complaints with hunters and racehorses; but I do not recollect ever in my life to have seen a carthorse with one, though of course such instances have occurred; nor have I found them by any means as common among other draught horses as are spavins. I even fancy, though I do not assert it as fact, that I have remarked curbs to be more prevalent among hunters than even wtth racehorses, which, if the case, I should attribute to the strain on the hocks of the former from the frequent exertion of leaping.

Now, we all know that harness-work, particularly with heavy weights, and especially in going up hills,

severely tests the hocks of the harness-horse ; and, as I said before, this constant exertion of them frequently brings on spavins, but it is not like the sudden strain that produces the curb. One thing must be borne in mind. Commoner horses are not watched as are hunters, but are frequently remarked (or quite as often not remarked at all) as going "a little lame." It is thought it will go off, and the horse is worked on till a confirmed spavin is the result. Then, as in the case of the hunter, where palliatives have been resorted to to keep the horse going, nothing short of severe application of the iron is effective, and not always then.

Most of the ailments of horses and men (save those occasioned by age and consequent failing of powers) could be *stopped*, ere they arrived at a point where they require *curing*, had we the means in some cases, or the foresight in others, of applying remedies in time ; for this reason, diseases of latent origin are found more difficult of cure than those that lame at once—the more insidious the approach of the enemy, the more dangerous he becomes.

Horses are readily cured of curbs, so as to be no more detriment to their service or going than if they had never occurred; but I rarely saw a horse severely fired for them that did not always go a little stilty on them ever afterwards. The severity of the firing shows the vet. (if a proper one) saw nothing short of such treatment would effect a cure; whereas, if taken in time, supposing he held the actual cautery necessary, a few strokes with a fine iron would probably have sufficed. The old idea of firing producing an artificial bandage in some cases, where sinews have been injured (or rather their surrounding parts), may avail; but it is quite a mistake as to its being of any service in *that way* as regards curb or bone spavin. The veterinary art now ranks so high, and its professors are men of such science in the medical profession, that the name of farrier is lost, and with it we miss numbers of fired horses, that are now cured by more scientific means, if persons will only put them under proper treatment in time.

FAULTY-HOCKED HORSES.

In reference to spavin, it is a somewhat peculiar disease, inasmuch as its existence ranges from confirmed and incurable lameness, to being all but (sometimes, indeed) perfectly innocuous—this not depending on its nature or size, but on the part on which it comes. If it in no way interferes with the pliability of the joint, it is, in point of fact, mere exostosis on the hock-bone, that may probably remain there during the horse's life without causing him inconvenience, unless it does so during its growth, when it may produce inflammation of the external periosteum, as frequently does a splent on first appearing, from the same cause. A splent, if occurring directly below the knee, and thus interfering with the action of the joint, is virtually a spavin on the fore-leg, though called by another name; this, if only appearing, we will say, on the front of the cannon-bone, might remain there, *ad infinitum*, without injury. With spavins, one inch difference in the situation causes pro-

bably all the difference between a useful or comparatively useless horse.

It requires no common eye to detect the presence of spavin in some cases. For instance, a horse with very large and prominent bones to his hocks will often appear to the inexperienced to have spavins, whereas this very circumstance is a strong guarantee against his ever being so afflicted. Such a horse is, in stable phrase, "rough in or on his hocks." It is not my province to enter into strict pathological description of the origin or nature of complaints; I merely give, as I have been requested to do, such information as pretty long experience warrants. There is one hint I will give, which may help those not conversant with such matters in distinguishing between a horse with strong irregular projection on his hock, arising from naturally large bones, and the projection that is caused by incipient or confirmed spavin. In the first case the edges of the projecting bone will be found definite, decisive, and to a certain degree sharp. In the spavin these edges do not appear; but the projection is, as it were, rounded off.

The projection in the region of the part where usually spavin appears, whether natural or from disease, is usually best seen by looking at the hocks from between the fore legs; but the mistake between naturally large and diseased hocks may still be made. One criterion I have always found a correct one to go by, which is this.

Nature sometimes indulges in somewhat curious freaks in forming her creatures, quadruped or biped, and disease will sometimes so alter parts of form or feature as to render the one or the other scarcely recognisable; but she rarely afflicts two limbs in so precisely equal degree that there is not to be discovered a difference between the appearance of the two. Thus, if the two hocks, in point of projection of bone, feel and appear *strictly* alike, however suspicious such enlargement might be (unless, indeed, the horse went lame, or showed stiffness), I should feel satisfied it was natural; but the slightest difference would at once quite alter my opinion. I have had no experience as regards spavined horses in my own case, having been fortunate enough never to

have a horse throw out one—and I took especial care never to buy a horse with one, or, to the best of my judgment, with hocks likely to fail either from natural weakness or bad formation; but with the complaints of horses belonging to others I have had a good deal to do—friends have always fancied I knew a good deal more than I really do; so I seldom had a spare stall, box, or outhouse, but it was converted into an hospital for friends' lame or sick horses. I can assure the reader I did not find playing gratuitous vet. a very profitable occupation. I am not aware of there being any peculiar-shaped hock more liable to spavin than another, though there decidedly is so as regards curbs. It is a very singular fact, or at least I hold it to be such, that, however placed the hock of the horse may be, whether it inclines inward, or outwards, or whatever may be his action or mode of going, all ailments fall on the inside; now there are joints and integuments in play on the outside as well as the in, but I never saw or heard of a spavin on the outside.

There are three ways in which a horse's hocks

are, as it is termed, "set under him." What I should call the proper way is when the hock, and consequently the leg, stands straight, neither inclining right nor left; such horse will be usually found to set his leg firmly on the ground, and to support the weight of the body as on a firm, steady prop. Others have their hocks inclining inwards,—"pinned in on his hocks;" while again, others are to a certain degree, as it were, bandy-legged behind, forming, as a writer might term, a parenthesis ( ); such hocks, on coming to the ground will be usually, seen (to use a not very erudite term) to whabble about, but ending in twisting outwards—many to such a degree, that, on the foot being placed on the ground, that also twists out of its place in an outward direction. I cannot but hold either of the two last-mentioned peculiarities as at least failings.

I have seen many horses a little "tied in at the hocks," capital goers; but there is usually an unpleasant movement in horses with their hocks set wide apart, and I have remarked such to be liable to clack or "forge" in trotting—a very disagreeable

habit, but one usually easily remedied. The outward twisting of the hocks and feet is particularly found to be produced when harness horses are going up hill with a heavy load behind them, such as we must now say formerly was the case with stage coaches. The greatest help we could afford such horses was by shoeing them particularly square at the toes on their hind feet; in fact, all horses for harness purposes should be, more or less, shod thus. The firm bearing it gives the toe on the ground will be at once perceived by taking a horseshoe and holding it on a table with the toe on the surface and the heel pressed on by the hand; it will be found the roundness of the toe gives it a mere point to rest on, consequently it twists from side to side. Now reverse the proceeding: let the two heels rest on the surface, the shoe will be found immovable. Shoeing round or square at the toes in a mitigated degree has the same effect, for it is the toe that in going up hill forms the principal *appui*.

It will be observed I have hitherto only alluded to bone spavin or exostosis of some sort. I have re-

marked the outside of the hock not being subject to similar complaint; even splent occurs ten times on the inside of the fore leg to once on its reverse. The only failing, or I should rather call it disfigurement, incidental to the outside of the hock, that I have observed (save from blows or other violent contact) are thorough-pins; these, as the name indicates, appear on each side; they are, when large, very unsightly, but seldom (I might figuratively say, never) lame; they are merely bursæ—too soft in substance to lame by pressure on other parts; they are, in fact, swellings coming on each side of the limb above the hock, and by pressure may be caused, while the pressure lasts, to disappear on either side of the limb—the size being doubled, or nearly so, on the other. I once had a horse with very large thorough-pins; they were as large as half a good-sized apple on each side of the hind leg. I bought him from seeing him carry fourteen stone in a "clipper" with Lord Howth's hounds, and, further, seeing him take the Mardyke (a piece of water as well known in Ireland as the Whissendine is in Leicestershire) in his swing.

I considered if he could go as he did with fourteen stone on him, he would feel eleven as racing weight; he did so, and his thorough-pins were no detriment to him.

The next ailment in the region of the hocks is hood or bog spavin. These are very common, and numbers of horses have them, more or less unnoticed. They do not often lame, unless very large. I once bought a horse, knowing he had them. He was a trotter. He was not lame till, of a sudden, they enlarged frightfully. I put him in the hands of a vet., who promised me he would send him back in a week with no signs of spavin remaining. He kept his word, and the horse kept sound—that is, till I sold him, six months afterwards.

I believe I have now mentioned all or most of the ailments incident to the hock, with their probable consequences. I therefore take my leave of the subject.

SMALL BONE.

There are many persons who indiscriminately condemn all horses that do not possess large leg-bones. Doubtless, good bone is a great desideratum in the horse; but persons are apt to form their conclusions solely from what bone he exhibits below the knee, and hind leg below the hock. A horse that is termed "tied in below the knee" is bad—one is so weak from the hock downwards in a general way; but much depends on the shape and symmetrical proportion of both. For instance, a leg long in the shank and tied under the knee, will be far weaker than one in just proportion, though in point of measurement larger than another. I do not recollect an instance of a horse breaking his leg when ridden, though I have known such instances occur (particularly in frosty weather) when going down hill in coaches. But in my experience I never saw one instance of a leg yielding, so far as bone went, from being light in that particular. I could quote many instances of horses, light in bone, carrying heavy

weights brilliantly. Blue Ruin carried his master, Mr. John Warde, who walked twenty stone; when I knew the horse first, he carried the huntsman. He was, in Byron's words,

Robust but not herculean —

a mere strong hunter, as all Warde's horses were.

Look at our Life-Guards' horses; many of them would be considered light in bone as hunters, to carry (say) thirteen stone; yet do these horses manage to get along with twenty-two (I believe about the average weight of a Life-Guardsman with all his accoutrements). It is true they do not cross country, but they often go considerable distances to a review, and bear that weight for many hours. We all know that an egg, properly poised, will bear an immense pressure; three tobacco-pipes, placed in a peculiar position, will sustain the pressure of a large pailful of water. Thus I hold that where light-boned horses are capable of carrying heavy weights, the attribute arises from a proper position of the bones and joints, irrespective of their size. We frequently see it thus

with small-armed men; they are often the hardest hitters, the sharpest bowlers, and the longest throwers, and frequently can lift great weights from the ground with one hand (or rather arm). It may be said all this is acquired knack. Granted; but all feats, where activity joined to strength is wanted, require knack. We may call carrying eighteen stone with hounds knack. It is so in a great measure. Where mere animal strength is required, knack is not necessary. I am not prepared to affirm (though I have heard it done) that the bone of the thoroughbred horse is as strong as that of the cart-horse. So far as the mere bone is concerned, I should be tempted to doubt it, though I am quite aware of the great difference of texture between the two, which renders the bone of the former far stronger *in proportion* than that of the latter.

The best judge in the world cannot say what weight a horse is equal to *till he tries*. A peculiar way of going enables some horses to carry weight another stronger horse would make a very bad flight of it with. Horses learn this in time, and will very

much alter their way of going to this end. Many horses at the beginning of a season show but *very* indifferently under high weight, that carry that weight with comparative ease to themselves at the end of it; the fact is, they have learnt how to save themselves, and to go in a form that renders the weight they have to carry manageable. The carpenter or blacksmith may be physically as strong as the miller or coal-porter, but they could not carry sacks of coals or flour with the same facility; nor could the coal-porter or miller wield the sledge-hammer as can the blacksmith.

To show how we may alter a horse's way of going by light or heavy weight, we will first instance the hack and hunter. I believe every man who knows anything of horses will concede to me, that the step of the hack should be light and quick; but, such step not being natural to all horses, let us suppose that we have a favourite who has it not. Such failing may certainly be a good deal altered by urging him in his paces, and at the same time holding him, to show him it is not the going faster you want, but

quickness of step. Riding him by the side of a horse quicker in his walk will also tend to improvement; but all this is a long job, and perhaps will not completely produce what we want, after all. Doubtless some persons will be surprised at the mode I should adopt to bring about what I want. We will suppose the hack to have been accustomed to carry twelve stone; of this we will suppose him perfectly master, so that he can walk, trot, or canter in such way as he pleases, and is natural to him. Put eighteen or twenty stone on him; he will find with this weight he cannot, as it were, lounge along quite at his ease. What! I think I hear some reader say; put twenty stone on a horse to quicken his motions! Even so, gentle reader; but perhaps you have always been too aristocratic in your habits ever to have carried anything heavier than, perchance, a small enamelled leather (not portmanteau, for it would not hold a cloak, but certain little indispensables for some purpose or other). With this you stepped along, quite at your ease; but let me clap a trunk of a hundredweight on your shoulder—you

would find the easy lounge wonderfully altered, and also find yourself compelled to go "*à petit pas,*" so as to enable each leg to come to the relief of the other in the quickest time possible, Weight acts on the paces of the horse in a similar way.

It may seem at first a singular statement to make, but it is a true one: a horse inclined to be unsafe with a light weight, will often go perfectly safe with a heavy one; the fact is, he is to a certain degree alarmed at the unusual weight on his back, steps short and quick, and minds his business. Of course I do not mean that such would be the case with a horse under any infirmity; the weight might have a prejudicial effect in this instance, though it does not absolutely follow that it would be so even in this case. We rarely see a hunter make a mistake with a heavy weight on him: the fact is, he feels conscious that, though he can recover himself after such a mistake or blunder, with ten stone on him, he could not do so with seventeen; so, either at fences or over rough ground, he is careful. A horse with a light weight will go striding carelessly along over

all sorts of ground; but with a heavy one he feels, in the first place, obliged to collect himself, and in the next, as it were, to pick his way. It is having learned this that enables horses accustomed to carry weight to do so in a manner that often astonishes us, and which, from their appearance, we should never conceive them capable of doing.

I had the question mooted to me by a very sensible man, and a good judge of horses, though in no way a racing man, "Whether I did not think race-horses would feel less the effect of weight when they came to run, if accustomed to be exercised with nine stone on them instead of five or six?" I have no doubt but they would, and if all races were four miles, carrying twelve stone, the idea might be a good one; but my friend forgot that with the race-horse we want a different style of going to what is desirable in the hunter; we do not want the race-horse to carry great weight, or go over rough ground, consequently we do not want to accustom or teach him to *collect*, but to *extend* himself. We know quite well that a racehorse could not live four miles

with eleven stone on him, going in the form of a two or a three-year-old for a mile, or a mile and a half, with eight, often in handicaps with six; but by the time the "old horse," that is, one four or five years old, contends for stakes at high weights, a little "leather flapping" has most probably taught him, like the hack or hunter, that difference of weight requires difference of action or form of going.

EWE-NECKED HORSES.

There are few greater drawbacks on symmetrical formation in the horse than a ewe-neck. A very trite punster would say it makes him look sheepish. It does so; for, in the common acceptation of the word, it implies poor and mean, and it has this effect on the horse. In burlesque stable phrase, such horses are described as having "their necks set on the wrong way," or "upside down"—meaning the curve or turn of the neck is the wrong side—in fact, topsy-turvy. Excepting appearance, the only objec-

tion to horses with such-formed necks is, from want of opposing muscle on the top or "crest" of the neck, and on each side of it just before the wither, they are apt to throw their heads up; and having, from the circumstance mentioned, the greatest facility for doing this, on the slightest restraint of the bridle up goes their heads, sometimes to the extent of "making a tooth-pick of their ears," which has occasionally been found rough practice in dentition. Such horses will rarely go without a martingal. I have said enough about these in a previous article to show I hold them in no way objectionable in any situation; I make no objection to ewe-necked horses if they possess attributes to compensate for their unsightly appearance.

When I speak of attributes compensating for ill-looks of any sort, I beg to observe I allude only to hunters and racehorses. Horses for ordinary purposes are not called upon for any superior or uncommon qualifications. Gentlemen do not now-a-days ride their hacks sixty or seventy miles in a day, and expect them to do this with comparative ease to

themselves and riders. Safety, pleasantness, good action, and docility are all the qualifications a hack of 1858 is called on to possess; it is hard if we cannot get these with good looks into the bargain. With a horse to carry a lady we should be a little more particular; but to have the best woman's horse that could carry a side-saddle, no *extraordinary* attributes, natural or acquired, are called for or required: here we must have, not only an absence of all unsightliness, but absolute good looks, if not perfect beauty. Now, I will reverse the thing. If I wanted a horse to carry a lady with hounds, I should throw looks aside—that is, as an indispensable qualification; for I, and thousands of others, know it is not easy to get a horse to carry ourselves as we like across country; how infinitely more difficult is it to find one to carry a woman in the same situation. It is true a lady does not, or, at least in my opinion, ought not to call on her horse for the same exertion of his powers that men do. It does not from this follow, that what we should term a bad horse would carry a woman (unless it be with a pack of slow

beagles). We may and do, risk our necks at times on a blown or tired horse; but the bare idea of a woman doing the same thing must freeze our very blood; no, her horse must be, comparatively, always fresh, and to be this he must be a *good one*. For such reasons, I should more disregard looks in a lady's hunter than I should in one for my own riding. I do not, or at least did not, mind a fall—like the eels, I was used to it; but I always took care so to mount my wife that she did not get one.

Although I deprecate ewe-necks on the score of appearance, I prefer even them to the stiff full neck we see some horses possess. I can find no greater similitude to such than those we see on rocking-horses, to whom the maker always takes care to give what he conceives to be a grand appearance. Anything approaching it in the living horse, though to some men's taste even desirable, is to me intolerable. In a charger who is only required to carry his neck, as the soldier sits nearly in the same position at all times, it might be borne, but its stiffness would be unfavourable in any other horse, the harness horse,

perhaps, excepted. A horse with such a formed neck cannot (however well disposed to do so) yield nicely to the reins. You very rarely see a very well-bred one with such a neck. I confess myself prejudiced against them; yet that can hardly, in fairness, be called mere prejudice that is based on reason. I will, in burlesque, compare a horse's neck to that of a wine-bottle—the nice light neck is like that of the bottle that has contained, or still contains, port or sherry; the neck I have described assimilates to that of the champagne-bottle, with comparatively no marked or decided place where it is set into the body. A neck, in my opinion, should be thin—that is, small in size—and shorter than some persons would admire. No man likes a long horse better than I do; but I should not, perhaps, call the horse so that merely measured a certain length from his nose to his tail, for his length might only be gained by a long neck—he might still be a short horse. But let me measure him from his chest to the extremity of the haunch, then if, in comparison to his height, he measures well, "I get a long 'un" (as

poor Tom Smart, the dealer, used to call such); and if a deep muscular body, I get what the same authority used to call "a nice 'un." My brother sportsmen, and eke good judges of horses, will be quite sure I do not allude to them, and I am sure will join me in saying that out of the thousands who keep horses, very few appreciate, or even know a really "nice one" when they see it.

I have not the smallest doubt but that, take many men who keep what are usually termed fine horses down to Leicester or Melton, and take them through the stables there, they would be grievously disappointed, and probably think their own and many of their friends' horses to be preferred. In the first place, such persons would probably have heard that most of the Leicestershire horses were very highly or thorough-bred: they would carry in their eye race-horses, or such as they see ridden in the park as hacks, yet thorough-bred; they would not be able to amalgamate in their idea the size and strength of the horses they would find there and the highly-bred one. They would, perhaps, expect, on a stable be-

ing opened, to be induced to exclaim, "What beauties!" Collectively they would not find them such; they are merely (as a lot) fine horses, and horses of extraordinary merits; many of them would want to be pulled out, and their merits as to shape and form pointed out. Many a horse, like many a fine picture, would be passed over by the non-judge till its merits are pointed out by a connoisseur. To the former many a picture is to be had for two or three guineas, that in his eye is preferable to a Poussin or a Gainsborough. A man may be quite sure that the horses he will see in a Melton stable will, if they do not strike at first as beautiful, like the fine picture, bear picking to pieces; and, generally, the more they are looked at the more they will be liked. When this is not the case, you may be sure the horse possesses superior and extraordinary qualifications, that more than compensate for any deficiency in appearance. It is just as easy for a man of large fortune, who only wants horses for ordinary purposes, to get handsome, or, if you please, beautiful horses, as it is to get beautiful carriages. He has

only to go to the coachmaker for the latter, and to a first-rate dealer for the former; that is, if his judgment and taste are good. But a stud of a dozen hunters is, as they say, "a horse of another colour." Beauty and merit combined are not to be got as a certain black gentleman "found sixpence, all in a lump;" nor could time, money, and judgment insure a man always having a dozen hunters by him of the above description, that is, if determined to have as good horses as any man can have on the aggregate. As with other horses, he may make sure of beauty in hunters, if that is his sole object; but the term "hunter" is not quite definite, so his beauties might not come up to what even my ideas of hunters should be. To get such, he may take my word for it, he must tolerate some drawback on beauty—aye, even the ewe-neck, the leading subject of this article.

PECULIAR HABITS IN HORSES.

WINDSUCKING.

I REPLY willingly to H. R.'s letter relative to his mare, and also make such observations as I conceive may be found interesting—among others, on wind-sucking in general. H. R. states he has a "London vet. of some note" at hand; he has, therefore, the command of information no doubt far more to be depended on than any I could give on subjects of a pathological nature—as, for instance, whether wind-sucking arises from indigestion or any other derange-ment of the stomach. Of course I entertain private opinions on the subject; but, though I may be a tolerably fair *journeyman* vet. in my own person, and have played such part to considerable extent in my own stables, I should hold it most arrogant in me

giving any opinion where a professional one is to be had.

So far as this objectionable trick goes, I do not think stable-mates likely to contract the habit from a horse that has it. Now a horse disinclined to feed will often be induced to set to work on hearing others do the same. He hears them, and possibly sees them, feeding. Here are two direct acts that encourage him to do the same. They are natural acts. But I cannot conceive, because a horse may see or hear, or both, another make an unnatural noise and perform an unnatural act, that he would be induced to do the same. I am a little sceptical about horses learning cribbing from each other. Horses are not, like monkeys, animals prone to imitate what they see. We will say a horse is a crib-biter or windsucker; there must exist or have existed some original cause for his becoming such. I should say, therefore, that a somewhat similar cause must occur to induce another horse to the same habit. The origin or cause of crib-biting has never been clearly ascertained; windsucking the

same. Consequently we are quite in the dark as regards any measures we could take to cure the propensity. A variety of contrivances will *stop* crib-biters; but not one has been found to do away with the inclination.

H. R.'s vet. is quite correct in saying horses will wind-suck in various ways; and it is highly probable that even if the mare is observed in the act of deglutition, she may not, as a necessary sequitur, swallow any wind. The acts of the particular mare in question appear to me, from description, to be more the result of playfulness, restlessness, or excitement, or, in short, the want of something better to do, than a direct tendency to windsucking. The latter says, she does not often make these motions when the stable is quiet. Now, I should infer that if disposed to windsucking, such would be precisely the time when she would practise it. Horses have seldom become crib-biters or windsuckers without its progress having been perceived; and very probably they have been corrected for it; they are, therefore, far more prone to practise the trick when all is

quiet, than when they are aware they will be observed. H. R. remarks his mare is apt to commence her evolutions—which, it appears, are somewhat multifarious—when any one approaches the corn-bin. This is evidently excitement from pleasure or anticipation; and I should say, when a horse was expecting a feed of oats, would be a somewhat extraordinary moment to begin windsucking. Most horses have some peculiar habits, either vicious or playful. H. R.'s mare appears of the latter sort; it is stated she will at times, as it were, smack her lips. I had one that, when being ridden, would, the moment he got excited, very audibly grind his teeth; when he saw a leap before him, he invariably did so.

I have said I was not quite satisfied of the fact of one horse teaching another to crib. I believe it is quite clear that the *first* crib-biter could not have learned it from another horse: he must have been induced to it from some cause affecting him personally. We do not know what that cause was, or what is the cause of others taking up the habit; probably the same cause exists to influence present

crib-biters as induced the first horse to crib. Why, therefore, should we entertain an opinion in favour of what strikes me as an improbability when I doubt not the animal is induced to it by some existing cause? It may be argued that many instances have occurred of a horse, no crib-biter himself, being put into a stable where there was one, and coming out sooner or later a confirmed cribber. This is no confirmation of the fact of his having learned to crib from another. We will suppose a man to enter a room that was exceedingly cold, he sees another sitting by a small fire, warming his hands; the other does the same thing, not from imitation, for, if he felt warm, the other might warm his hands to all eternity, without the man feeling comfortably warm following his example; but the fact would be about this, the first man warmed his hands because they were cold; the second, if he is cold, does the same thing—cold is the inducement to both; and I have no doubt but that some similar circumstance that first induced the one to crib, causes the other to crib also. It may be objected that if it was anything in

the treatment of the horses that caused two to crib, the same cause would make all the horses in the stable cribbers, if there were several. In the first place, I am not supposing it might be anything relative to treatment that caused the habit; but if I had done so, be it remembered that in the human species different persons are affected differently by the same thing; for instance, some persons cannot bear heat, others cold; some cannot bear being curtailed as to quantity in what they eat, others cannot bear repletion; some require frequent refreshment, others are capable of, and prefer, long abstinence; some delight in acids, others cannot make use of them with impunity. Thus, supposing we were to hold treatment as having an influence, it does not follow, because one or more horses become cribbers from any peculiar treatment, that every horse in the stable would be affected by the same circumstance.

I have heard it alleged that long abstinence, as in the case with troop-horses, has been found to lead to cribbing. This may probably be the case; and, if cribbing is merely a trick or habit, I can easily con-

ceive a horse not suffered to lie down, and having nothing to eat for many hours, might learn to crib by way of amusement. But, in such case and in such stables, the supposition of horses learning cribbing from each other falls to the ground; otherwise in such stables nearly every other horse would learn the habit.

Whatever may be the cause of cribbing, and whether horses learn it from each other or not, I think H. R. may make himself quite easy as to the apprehension of (supposing his mare to windsuck) her teaching it to her stable companions. The act is not definite enough to cause it to be imitated; and, depend on it in a general way, horses will not readily be forced into learning unnatural acts, much less adopt them from imitation.

I have had very little—indeed nothing—to do with cribbers, and never had but one windsucker in my life; he did it so slightly, I had him some time before I found it out. He was a very fine four-year-old thorough-bred horse; and on the late Tom Ferguson, the owner of Harkaway, seeing the horse,

he recognised him. He very coolly said: "If I had kept him, I should have cut a bit of his tongue off, and stopped his sucking; but, as I got my price, I sold him." I put him in training; but, as in the case of Tom Ferguson, as I got my price, I also sold him. Of the efficacy of the apparent cruel operation of cutting off part of the tongue, I cannot speak; the reader has it as I had.

ATHLETIC EXERCISE.

I HAVE been frequently asked (as it will be inferred by persons totally unacquainted with such matters) how long it usually takes to bring out a racehorse fit to run. Now, no man alive—no, not John Scott himself—could give a direct answer to such a question. He must, prior to giving such, make the queries of—What is his age? How has he been treated (if he be a young one)? How far has he been broke? What distance will he have to run? What sort of constitution has he? Then, when he has given a crude reply as to the time he considers a horse, under the circumstances represented, would on an average require to bring him to the post in fit

form—even then, temper, capability of enduring work, and consequently how far he may train on, or the reverse, and again, how far his soundness may stand training, will all frequently set at naught the most honest answer judgment and experience may have led a man to make as regards time, and the trouble a horse may give in training.

The question asked is, however, one of far less difficulty to answer. In the first place, it is but reasonable to infer that the gentleman proposing to prepare himself for his race has so lived that his constitution and stamina are good; so he will not have, as is sometimes the case with young race-horses, to get that up to the mark, so as to enable them to be put into training—he may set about his preparation at once. I am neither acquainted with his age, habits, or present form, but we will suppose that he has youth on his side; and from the feat he proposes to perform, we will infer his usual habits have been active, and that his form is such as bodes no impediment to his training or preparation.

It must strike every one that, with man as well as

horse, the preparation required must vary in accordance with the exertion and energies that will be called upon to be surmounted in the race. A two-year-old may come out in far fuller form than the horse engaged to run in stakes where the distances are long. In the first place there is a thing to be dreaded, which persons unused to training have little idea of—that is, in technical terms, "fat inside." Now this does not materially affect the wind in a very short spurt; but neither man nor horse can run a distance if under its influence. When fat remains on the inside, the lungs cannot sustain the work they are called on to perform in such a case; besides which, the specific gravity of the body calls on the sustaining and propelling powers to perform a duty that they are unable to sustain for long distances.

Thus far the training of man and horse are analogous in many particulars; but the person who undertakes the preparation of a man to run, has a wonderfully easier task than the trainer who undertakes the preparation of a horse to race. The latter has only

his judgment on appearances as his guide; the first can ascertain the feelings of the man in training from his own mouth, though the truth is sometimes a little twisted and turned about to procure relaxation where a man has to undergo severe preparation; and I do not hesitate in saying that no man, at least very few, would have resolution to go through the necessary ordeal of preparing themselves for a long and severe race, if left to themselves, be it against time or another man. The advantage of a time-race is, that a man may so previously try himself that he can (barring illness or accident) reduce it to an almost certainty, whether or not he can accomplish what he undertakes. If he undertakes running a given distance against an opponent, he can only judge of the chances for or against his success by knowing the men against whom his opponent has run, and whether he has beaten, or been beaten by, those. If a man knows this, and particularly if he has run with any of those men himself, he may form a moderately accurate estimate of his own pretensions; but let him bear in mind, none of those

races against opponents authorise him to feel secure. Men vary a good deal in their performances, and frequently in the time of doing them; and let him recollect, a real runner can go a long way in two seconds.

For a short race (or, indeed, any race) the first thing usually necessary is a mild aperient. I am alluding to a man supposed to be in quite a fit state to go into preparation. Living as the generality of men do, an almost total change of habits as to food becomes necessary; not that he is required, like the *wasting* jockey, to abstain from what any reasonable man would be quite satisfied with—we do not want to *waste* the runner, unless he happens unfortunately to be given to obesity, and even then sweats and additional exercise are the means to be employed to bring him into *form*. By change of food I mean an avoidance of all that may merely fill the stomach without nourishing or invigorating the frame. Conceive, for instance, a man in training indulging in what he might term "a nice little white-heart cabbage," or even "a nice mealy potato." Soup

should be avoided, not that it would probably do any direct harm, but it would not do good to make amends for the space it would occupy in the stomach; fish is bad for the same reason; all pastry and puddings should, *pro tempore*, be banished; a man in preparation attempting, for instance, a rhubarb tart, would deserve to be punished, as such things sometimes affect us. Fruit should be taken with great circumspection and in great moderation; there can be no objection to a thoroughly ripe orange or a slice of good pine, if his aristocratic taste leads to it, but all common fruit must be banished. We cannot hear of beer of any sort, or in a general way ardent spirits; a little cold brandy and water is perfectly admissible—in fact, some subjects require it; but in a general way, good sound port or sherry must be the staple drink during the preparation to run: a glass or two more or less need not be objected to, but three or four glasses is all that is required for breath or stamina.

I see I have objected to certain articles of food. I will now state what I consider the best. Mutton

and game I hold to rank the highest, but beef, poultry, veal, or even pork, by way of variety, may be taken with impunity by some stomachs. In mentioning poultry, I include only chickens and fowls; but I should strenuously recommend all but mutton, beef, or game being abstained from when the man under training comes near his time of performance, for then any little *emeute* in the internal regions is to be strictly guarded against.

Now as to the time required to prepare a man to run, I will answer as categorically as the subject admits of doing, and should say, under ordinary circumstances, with a man of active habits, and comparatively in good wind, three weeks will suffice to prepare him for a short race, which it appears a gentleman who has addressed me on the subject intends running. But let him not deceive himself: it appears he intends running a hundred yards, and a quarter of a mile. Now it may be he may prove very good as to the one distance, yet very mediocre as to the other; but as some guide to him, to test his qualities, I will state that, ten or eleven seconds

are first-rate time for the one; a minute or a little more equally good for the longer distance. Let him commence by a gentle run, in the morning, and during the day, taking care that he is neither indolent nor taxes his powers so as to bring on distress: a little fatigue must be encountered, but when absolute distress comes on, the exercise has been too much for man or horse. To fill up the time between his exercise, cricket, tennis, or racquets, or a stroll with his gun, may be advantageously made use of.

STABLES.

A Correspondent, C.W., having made some inquiry respecting the dimensions of stables, it being an object in which the interest of the public is materially involved, the following article, I conceive, will be acceptable.

"Necessity," they say, "makes a man acquainted with strange bedfellows." Truly the necessity, convenience, avarice, or carelessness of man often makes the horse acquainted with strange—that is, queer stables; most of them on the general surface of the earth, but others beneath it, while the first-floor is frequently the habitation of the better class of horse. Where a man may keep his horse from convenience is one thing; but as C. W. states he has built one stable, and intends building another, there can be no doubt but that he wishes to erect a good one, comprehending all that is necessary to his horse's

convenience, comfort, and well-doing. The expense he means to go to in the shape of material, inside or out, has nothing to do with either—such depends on his taste or pocket.

C. W.'s question chiefly relates to the height of stables. A low one *must*, under any circumstances, be a bad—that is, an unhealthy one; while, on the other hand, a too lofty one is difficult to keep sufficiently warm for the horse's comfort. I should say that from thirteen to fourteen feet (at most) is about a correct height for a stable. Much has been written and said on the subject of ventilation; yet are persons apt to make mistakes as to the means of insuring it. We all know that exhalations rise upwards, whether arising from the insensible perspiration exuded from the body of the horse, or from that far more noxious source, foul litter. I will not suppose that in a well-conducted stable such a system as "mucking out" at stated intervals is permitted to exist; but supposing all saturated straw is properly removed every morning, there will be more or less exhalation: this, rising as high as the ceiling will

permit, floats about till it settles on that and the surrounding walls; hence the damp often found in ill-ventilated stables. But let it be noticed that this perhaps imperceptible exhalation is ever going on; so, though it is constantly ascending, in its progress the horse inhales it, and the previous exhalation having no means of escape, a portion is kept down by that overhead; thus an impure air pervades the whole stable.

If it is admitted, which I trust it will be, that exhalations rise, it must be quite evident that the higher we place the means of its escape the more effectually we get rid of it. We frequently see ventilators (as they are called and designed to be) placed half-way up in the walls, or, at least, eight or nine feet from the ground. They are all but useless for the intended purpose, while they, on the other hand, answer a very bad one, namely, admitting the cold air (if it is cold) in far closer proximity to the horse's body than he would find comfortable. Windows to a stable should always, in my opinion, be made very close to the ceiling; ventilators the same;

the great use of the latter being that they can admit a current of air when wanted so close to the ceiling that they purify the air the horses breathe, without rendering the general temperature of the stable cold and chilling. I hold that all horses should stand in the stable what may be called north and south; it matters not which extremity of the animal stands to the north. My reason for preferring such a position for a stable is this: in summer the ventilators can be opened, and will admit a refreshing cool air into the stable: and in winter, or cold weather, if they or the windows are opened, it is a genial breeze we want.

It will be found one of the greatest comforts possible to horses if for summer a second window (we will call it) is made to fit the aperture in the wall. This need simply be a frame, on which such canvass should be stretched as we usually see used for meat-safes; the same for the apertures of the ventilators. Those for the windows may be removed in winter to save them from weather: those used for the ventilators may remain all the year round. I have had an extra door made of the same materials, which

afforded opportunity in summer to leave the usual stable-door open when wished. All these are very cheap contrivances, and add wonderfully to the comfort—and I may say well-doing—of horses, who can scarce get rest when their tormentors the flies intrude themselves.

I perceive that C. W. very judiciously intends having two stables, instead of putting all his horses together. It must strike every one that horses for different purposes are used at different hours, and thus, when many stand together, they are all kept on the *qui vive;* for instance, a hunter should have what hay we wish him to eat given him at three or four o'clock the day before hunting. Now, as this quantum may not be quite as much as he would eat, it is unfair he should see other horses racked up at eight o'clock; the same by water—not that I was ever one for stinting a horse of water to the extent some persons carry it. It was all very well to give a hunter little or no water on hunting mornings when hounds met at break of day; but that system is quite uncalled for when they meet at eleven. Still the treat-

ment of horses destined to different occupations must be somewhat different, and thus horses should each stand with their own class.

Having said thus much of ventilation and the classing of horses, I will now venture my ideas of the size stables ought to be as regards look, convenience, and safety. They should be, if the racks and mangers run the whole length of the stable in front of the horses, eighteen feet from wall to wall; if there are corner racks and mangers, seventeen feet are sufficient. The width of a stable should be like that of a dining-room, just the same whether intended to accommodate eight persons at dinner or eighteen. The length of the stable depends, as a matter of course, on the number of stalls: I should say that for a six-stall stable thirty-six feet from wall to wall would be about a desirable size; this will be found to leave each horse about five feet ten for his stall. If persons fancy a wider stall looks more imposing, or if, in their opinion, a wider one is any comfort to the horse, by all means let them make their stalls so; but, personally, though I should recommend a roomy

stall—which five feet ten is—I would rather not have them wider ; it encourages horses to stand, as it were, corner-ways, and further admits of their getting the trick of stretching themselves out when they lie down, by doing which they frequently get cast. A person not very conversant with horses might good-naturedly remark : " It is cruel to deprive a horse of the means of resting himself in a comfortable position." My reply would be : It is *not* a comfortable position, and is only resorted to for a very short time by horses in extreme pain, or under extreme fatigue. The position is in itself a painful one, and is only used in the cases I speak of when, in common parlance, a horse "don't know how to lie " to ease himself. Under either of the circumstances alluded to, he is entitled to a comfortable box ; but for horses in health, and in common work, it is merely a trick they learn which very wide stalls encourage. A horse can lie down and rest perfectly comfortable in a very small space—for this four feet would suffice ; therefore, allowing him five feet ten, I think it will be admitted, is all that can be wanted both for appearance and convenience.

WARMTH OF STABLES.

I FEEL it a duty I owe myself, and also a proper respect to pay to my readers, to account for my articles being of so desultory and erratic a character. I beg to remark that most of them take their rise from questions put to me by readers through the medium of THE FIELD: thus, I consider if a sportsman is in doubt in any way, and compliments me by asking my ideas on the subject, there must be many readers quite at a loss as regards such subject, and consequently my articles may be really useful to them. Having thus accounted for the varied nature of my subjects, I trust I need say no more on this point.

I have been questioned on the subject of keeping a fine coat on horses in winter. My correspondent writes me word that his horses, even at the early part of the commencement of winter, show prognostics of coats that will by no means satisfy his particularity as to the fineness of them. If he was a man keeping two or three horses only, we might

suppose his ill-luck had put him in possession of animals with a peculiar tendency to long and rough coats in winter; but, as he keeps a large number of horses, this cannot be the case: besides which, he is a man of considerable fortune, particularly fond of horses, and of that liberal turn of mind that withholds no reasonable and proper expenditure for the comfort of the animals about him. He is, moreover, a sportsman, and a good judge of horses; so it is not neglect, bad management, or any parsimony, that has produced what he complains of.

He further states, he finds a difficulty in keeping his stables sufficiently warm, keeping in view wholesome ventilation. I cannot conceive this to arise from any fault as regards the formation of the stables; for those appertaining to property of the class of my correspondent's are not likely to be built but in such way as to be conducive to the well-doing of their inhabitants, in all ways. We must look further for the cause of the two failings complained of.

It strikes me that, as regards the prognostics of

long coats during the winter, my correspondent may have been guilty of an omission which is sure to produce the results complained of. This is the not keeping horses warm enough *from the moment* we find their summer coat begins to stir. Its doing so we know arises from the shooting of the young coat, be it a spring or winter one. At this season horses should be kept particularly warm. The plant of the young coat (if I may use the expression) takes its tendency to remaining short and fine, or growing long, in accordance with the warmth the body is kept in at this particular time. It is said, "Providence tempers the wind to the shorn lamb;" but if we were to denude the lamb in March of his wool, we are not to expect the temperature of that month will change, that the lamb may not suffer from our act. Be this as it may, I know Nature furnishes a coat to the horse according to climate. The Arab and Persian horse have fine short coats; the Norwegian and Russian, also the Scotch shelty, a long one. We must, therefore, if we wish a horse to have an Arab coat, keep him in an artificial Arab climate;

and, be it recollected, the East was the original birth-place of the horse. Warmth is natural to him. It is only from habit and long use he has grown to thrive in a cold or even temperate one. I am quite convinced the young hair is influenced as to its growth by the feelings of the animal, arising from the temperature we make for him at the time its first germ shows itself. In some proof of this, a friend of mine brought from Norway a horse of that country, and of the prevailing colour, a kind of mouse-coloured dun, with a blackish list down his back bone. He brought him over in the spring, and his coat would hide your fingers if you ran them through it. Change of climate caused him to shed this earlier than our horses do; and early in April he showed a summer coat as fine as an English horse's. The coat might, perhaps, have been fine in summer in his own country. The bison, who sheds his enormous covering in summer, is then as fine as our ox; but he gets it again as winter approaches; so, doubtless, would my friend's horse have done in Norway. His master, however, took my advice,

and kept his Norwegian in (to him) a warm *artificial* climate from the moment he saw symptoms of a hair stirring. And I can vouch for the fact that this horse carried a coat during the winter as fine as any hunter; indeed, it was particularly fine. The fact was, that, from keeping him warm, and the change of climate, the horse's body and skin were in the state we may conclude the Eastern horses to be. We all know that many animals will change in colour if taken to a cold climate. If, therefore, cold can so affect the coat as to change its hue, we can readily believe the effect it has on its growth.

I have gone into many stables in winter time, and have found them uncomfortably hot. This arises from our grooms and ourselves feeling the cold, and this calls attention to the warmth of the stables: but when the horse began shedding his coat we probably felt warm enough, and consequently permitted our stables to be too cool, not to say cold—or, at all events, did not keep them up to the necessary warmth, to check the growth of a long coat. Then when we see horses with their coats staring, we shut

out every breath of air, and run into the other extreme. It is too late; nothing but spring will then have any effect; the singeing-tin is then the only resource.

I am convinced a great deal of mischief is often done from giving horses, as it is termed, a "course of physic," about the time they are shedding their coats, and are, consequently, chilly and cold in themselves. *A course* of physic! What for? A horse that has been judiciously fed and treated during the summer usually wants no physic. It used to be given to get "the foulness out of him." What foulness? If there is any, why was it permitted to accumulate there? The grooms ought, if it could have been effected, to have been physicked instead of the horses. To do anything periodically with a horse, I hold to be bad judgment; for in such case we are apt to do it whether required or not. It is thus with physic; it should only be given in case of disease or the manifestation of its approach. Formerly horses were physicked in the autumn, to get the summer grass "out of them;" then, when we had

got them in high condition and stamina by oats and work, in the spring they again got physic to get the oats "out of them," I suppose to make room for the grass. Nothing could be more preposterous. In those days a mild dose of physic during the hunting season was never thought of, however much the horse might show indications of wanting it, and most of them do.

A great deal has been said and written about ventilation. We English, if we get a thing in our heads, usually carry it to the extreme. Ventilation is quite proper and necessary to a stable, or rather to the horses that inhabit it. It is necessary in a house and the rooms we inhabit; but we do not in cold weather open the windows of the room we are dining in. Our bedroom windows are thrown open when we leave it; but we do not in winter have them so when we are there. Let us act upon the same principle with our horses; let their apartments be warm and comfortable; and then, if the stable and beds are properly kept and cleansed, so that no unpleasant smell of an ammoniacal nature or otherwise is per-

ceived, and no dampness on the walls exists, there is no fear as regards ventilation. I have never heard of any ill effects arising from the wholesome warmth exuding from the body of a healthy horse, though much mischief occurs from foul litter and want of proper drainage, want of the floor of the stalls being frequently washed when the horses are out, et cetera; but I should be very averse to my horses being starved with cold, to let out bad smells occasioned by negligence of those in care of them. Our own nose will tell us whether a stable is kept properly sweet, and our horses too will in time tell us if it is not.

TRAINING HORSES TO HARNESS.

ALTHOUGH I should be one of the very last to recommend any private person that could employ his time better to usurp the place of the colt-breaker or breaksman, still there may be circumstances under which it would be advisable for a man to perform himself the duty of either or both. But before he does so, let him ask himself the following questions, and trust to his good sense for answering them. Does he possess great command of temper, inexhaustible patience, much presence of mind, and strong nerve? Unless his conscience answers these queries satisfactorily, let him not attempt a business that requires all these.

With such indispensable attributes and proper appliances, I may, perhaps, give him some hints that

may enable him to train his horse to harness without accident to the animal, himself, or others.

We will suppose a gentleman in the country has a horse that in all that has been required of him has shown gentleness and docility; he wishes to break him to harness, and draws a natural inference that, from his placidity on all occasions, he will go quietly. The probability is, that with gentle usage, he will do so; but it by no means amounts to a certainty that this will be the case; yet a great deal depends on the care and judgment shown on first putting him in. We are to recollect the horse has (in a general way) winkers on, consequently cannot see behind him. If a man will only judge by his own feelings, he will recollect how surprised, and in some cases alarmed, he feels on any one or anything touching him behind. So feels the horse. We may say, if he rushes forward or strikes out, "It was only the end of the trace," or anything else; how is the horse to know this? A man standing in the street would turn as quickly round if a harmless sheep touched him, as if a tiger or a man with a stiletto in his hand did the same thing.

We are cautioned by men conversant with the breaking of horses to be careful lest we *alarm* them —perhaps *surprise* would be a more proper term. The horse is not, in the full sense of the word, alarmed or frightened by a shaft accidentally touching him, but he is surprised. This probably leads to what in the end causes him a fright he will never forget; for, let people think as they may, direct fright is an event that is never erased from the horse's memory. A man, we will say, encounters an object in the dark; he either grapples with it or strikes at it. The horse does the latter, for he is virtually in the dark as to what approaches him from behind. It may be said that a man, on being touched behind, does not immediately strike behind him before he turns to see what surprizes him; but be it borne in mind the man does not wear winkers, so he turns to see the cause of that surprise. He has not a gig or a break behind him to prevent his doing this, and, above all, he has reason.

In all things connected with horses, if we wish to succeed, time is indispensably necessary; whatever

is done with them in a hurry, is done badly. All we teach him, is a work of time, and, having taught him, the getting him in condition to perform what we wish is a work of time also. "*Festina lente*" would be an appropriate motto over the stable-door of a trainer of racehorses or a breaker of colts.

Horses, whether young or old, if they are averse to going in harness, show it in one or more of the following ways: they either refuse to advance—that is, face the collar—kick, rear, run back, lie down, or attempt to run away. I have had some to deal with who have rung the changes on these *agrémens* in succession; but I must admit it has been when circumstances have rendered a horse being tried in harness, in common phrase, "there and then necessary." With one left to my own discretion, I never found this occur in the same objectionable degree. My method may, at first, appear a slow one, but it will be found the quickest in the end; that is, if a man wishes a horse so trained to harness as not to have the same work to go over again in a week or

two, from finding he had kicked a gig to pieces, or run away with it and its driver both together, or, indeed, sometimes separately.

We have supposed a gentleman in the country wishing to accustom his horse to harness. If he has it not, let him borrow or hire a very light jockey-cart, on springs. I say on springs, as such run the most level, and without the noise and jolting of those without such advantage. Before this is wanted, let the harness be quietly put on the horse in the stable; let it remain on while he is fed, watered, and to a certain degree, dressed, in fact all day; let him be quietly led out in it; and in a couple of days he will take no more notice of it than of his customary clothing. When perfectly reconciled to the trappings, fix a couple of cords, or a pair of driving reins, to the end of the traces; give them to a man to hold while the horse is led on. Now, when this is done the man is apt to throw the traces about, under the idea of accustoming the animal to feel them flapping against his sides and thighs; but in nine cases in ten the man does not *accustom* the

horse to feel this; he merely surprizes him by feeling a something striking against those parts to which he is unaccustomed: the horse jumps forward, right and left, as he feels the trace touch him—the effect of being in a hurry, and wanting to bring that about in a few minutes that might perhaps occupy a morning or two to accomplish. We will suppose a horse to have become used to the traces and the pressure of the collar, from the man gradually increasing his tension on the traces, till the horse will freely draw the man forward, though exerting all his strength in resisting it.

A horse having learned to do all this willingly, and without hesitation or alarm, is half broke. But do not let any one deceive himself, or rather be deceived by appearances; let him act with as much caution in putting the horse between the shafts as if he had shown evident symptoms of resistance. I grant the horse may have no disposition to vice; but he is as susceptible of alarm as one who has, perhaps more so; and be it remembered that a frightened horse is often worse to deal with than a vicious one.

We will suppose him to have been got quietly between the shafts, traces fixed, kicking strap and belly-band fastened, of course, the precaution must be taken of having a flat-headed hemp halter under the bridle. Let him stand—the man at his head encouraging him, and another at his side doing the same thing. He may, probably, be a little fidgetty; if, in doing so, he brings himself in contact with the shaft, he will not mind that more than bringing himself in contact with the standing of his stall, a wall, or gate. But it would be found a very different thing if the shaft was brought in contact with him; he would feel that as the approach of some extraneous object that he knows not of, and, not being able to see what it is, would probably kick at it: the shoving himself against an opposing object, he feels to be his own act; and he is not alarmed by doing so.

His being restless is rather a favourable symptom. In all probability he will be inclined shortly to move forwards; on no account let any audible click of the tongue be used. The moment he voluntarily at-

tempts to move, let him do so, in any direction he may be disposed (that is, if you have space to admit of it). His fidgetting does not matter a farthing, he has voluntarily moved in *some* direction. You will have little trouble with a horse acting thus; all that will be wanting is a man gently leading him about for a day or two—a driver getting quietly into the cart, gig, or break, the man still leading him; he may thus be coaxed into a trot, by the man by his side running on, and encouraging the horse to follow. He then insidiously slips away, fastens the shank of the halter to the harness, and quietly seats himself by the driver's side. This horse is broke — all he wants is practice: the time occupied has only been four or five days. He has been gradually brought to a knowledge of his business: so far as not feeling alarm, or having found it irksome to him.

It is quite possible a horse might be at once put in harness, and go quietly; but the next time he was put in he might kick the vehicle to pieces. He would not, as in the first case, have been *taught;* he had merely at a risk been once driven.

We have supposed a docile and good-tempered horse to have been, without much trouble, broken to harness, have shown the rational way of effecting it, and at the same time the inattentions quite likely to have marred the attempt. But we are to recollect that all horses are not docile or good-tempered, and it thus becomes a matter requiring the superior sagacity of man, compared with that of the brute, to circumvent any ill designs on the part of the latter, and, by superior tact and patience, to wield him to our purpose.

I am aware that some readers will be, to a certain degree, surprised at my having said it was, on the whole, a favourable symptom—a horse being somewhat fidgetty on first finding himself in harness. I assert this on the broad basis of experience. His fidgetting shows at least a desire to move *somewhere;* and, being carefully indulged in this wish, care and gentleness will probably shortly render him willing to go *anywhere.*

We now come to one who, finding himself in harness, with some sort of vehicle behind him, stands

still enough, but places his fore-feet forwards, and looks from side to side as far as his neck will serve him to this effect, or those by his side permit him; he makes no attempt to move, but stands doggedly still. This horse will plunge—(and do not be deceived by his fallacious appearance of quietude)—he will probably plunge violently; but give him a chance; let him stand, but with plenty of help at hand; the probability is, it will be wanting. No "klk" or other sign of wanting him to move must be made till we find further patience of no avail; then some indication that he will not be permitted to stand still *ad infinitum* must be given. The best is the man at his head coaxing and patting him, at the same time trying to lead him gently forwards; but let the man take care of himself, for instead of, as invited to do, stepping forwards a pace or two, the chances are that in some direction he will suddenly plunge twenty. Perhaps after doing so he will again stand still in dogged sulkiness, then again play the same game on being required to move, or will continue plunging in successive

desperate bounds. The only thing to do in such a case is with a man on each side to hold him, let him plunge till he is tired with the effort. Now, I do not mean to say that such a horse is not to be conquered in single harness; but the wisest plan would be to take him out, put on the proper harness, and at once put him to a double break, with a steady resolute break-horse who has both the power and the will to hold such a reprobate, and to teach him that, with a break behind him, and a companion beside him who knows his business, plunging will avail him little. A good break-horse will hold him till he is tired of his exertions, or, on the signal being given, will at once lug him off, break and all.

It may be asked, Why not adopt such plan at first? My reason for putting horses in single harness as a beginning is this: if disposed to kick, he can do no mischief by this, either to himself or others In single harness the kicking-strap will hold him down; now in double harness, though the splinter-bar be stuffed to prevent his scarring his hocks or legs, he may kick over it and get entangled in the

fore part of the carriage; or if he only kicks over the bar, the roller-bolt renders the getting the leg off sometimes a troublesome and dangerous job, for it is a singular fact that a horse with his leg thus fixed will lean so heavily on it as to endanger its being broken. It might be inferred that, from the pain occasioned by thus leaning on the limb, instinct would teach him not to do so. Experience, however, shows us that in such cases instinct will not teach him to do otherwise; or, at all events, sulkiness and ill-temper are stronger than instinct, for lean he most probably will. I have before now had the pole of the break taken out and passed under his body, to support him while his leg was being extricated, and even then the sulky brute would lean on this till the united strength of a couple of men, with even this strong lever, had quite enough to do to hold him up and prevent his falling, in which case a broken leg would be almost the certain consequence.

The generality of persons are not aware to what extent a determined kicker will carry his propensity.

I have had the toe-board split under my feet. Horses will sometimes kick over the traces (or rather trace); this, though it produces probably a succession of kicking, is not of the consequence it might appear. After a horse has kicked over, his body is directed obliquely from the carriage, so his kicks miss it; probably he kicks back again into his proper place; if not, as a horse is seldom quite up to his collar when kicking, the trace is easily set free by unbuckling it at the tug-buckle. Sometimes they will kick over the pole; this is a far more awkward affair, as in his struggles he will sometimes strike the legs of the break-horse, who, however, is usually cunning enough to avoid such casualty, so far as the traces permit him to do so. Releasing the outside trace sets him free; and, depend upon it, he will take care to get out of the way of blows from the kicking horse. Fortunately, however, when a horse kicks over the pole, the awkwardness of his situation prevents his kicking very violently; and taking out the pole sets him free. Nothing cows a reprobate horse more than finding he has a resolute

comrade who is not to be ruffled by any tricks a vicious horse may show, who will lug him along in spite of himself; and, when told to do so, will keep him going, in defiance of his kicking. A horse cannot kick very high or very violently while kept going; he must, to do either, have time to rest his fore legs on the ground; and I have known break-horses, finding the other kick, voluntarily start off in a gallop, and keep the other going at a pace at which he had no time to kick. It might be asked, How has a horse sufficient power to keep a carriage and a resisting horse at such pace? It is readily answered. A break, or any carriage, in quick motion requires little effort to keep it going; and a horse in motion is not like one standing still—his powers of resistance when going are small, as a hand very lightly placed behind a running man would effectually prevent his stopping.

One thing must be invariably observed: after any asualty occurring through the vice of a horse, if he is even obliged to be released from his harness, or the carriage, put him in again *directly*, that he may

not fancy that he has beat you, or that he gets any advantage from his vicious manœuvres; let him find that it is only when he has ceased from them that he is released. Many horses are wonderfully cunning, so it becomes our interest to show that we are more cunning still; and, if they exhibit brute force, to show them that indomitable determination combined with patience are more than a match for that also.

Let it be borne in mind that when we have once come to direct open and violent contention with a horse we must go through with it, for if he once finds that he can beat us, he will ever do so. It is the case in everything we have to do with the horse, whether he beats us by any particular trick or by violence; for instance, if a racehorse at exercise bolts away with and overpowers the lad riding him, or if he throws him off, it becomes necessary to change the lad for a stronger one or a better horseman.

With horses, therefore, I have ever been very careful not to drive matters to extremity, as in such cases you are often obliged to have recourse to severity

that it is unpleasant to inflict, or, if beaten, you confirm the animal in a bad habit or absolute vice.

I have stated previously that a horse planting his legs forward and looking from side to side, yet doggedly standing still, was a pretty sure indication that he meant plunging, when induced or forced to move. It will generally be found to be the case; but few rules or symptoms are without exception. Now, it is very probable that the novelty of finding himself attached to a carriage may occasion a similar proceeding on the part of the horse; and thus, finding himself (in Transatlantic term) "in a fix," he is afraid to move. Again, if he has not, as I recommended, been taught to bear the pressure of the collar on his shoulders, he feels himself held back by a something to which he is unaccustomed, so does not know that he really *can* move forwards; thus, he may refuse to stir, and yet be the best tempered and disposed of quadrupeds. Teach him that by exertion he can move forwards, notwithstanding the opposition, he will do so; but till he has been taught this we have no cause for wonder, still less

for anger or severity, on his refusing to do so. I am now speaking of a good-tempered horse, who calls upon us by every feeling of humanity, judgment, and, indeed, our own interest, to treat him with gentleness and to teach him with discretion.

We will suppose such a horse to be put for the first time in double-harness, with a break-horse at his side, ready and willing to act as circumstances may require or the breaksman direct. It is in no way to be expected that a horse thus circumstanced will for some little time face his collar, unless from vice he plunged, or tried, from that or fright, to run away; but the animal we are speaking of, we suppose to be perfectly good-tempered, but as perfectly ignorant of the business required of him—such a horse calls for the greatest care, that he may not become alarmed. Even the break-horse must not be allowed to move on suddenly; for if he does, he will cause the pole-piece of his companion to give a sudden snatch on his neck, which would very possibly produce resistance. Let the novice in harness be encouraged and patted. On the least indication

that he is willing to advance, let the break-horse quietly take off the break, and let him alone keep it in motion without any attempt on the part of the driver or the man running at the side to make the other tighten his traces. It is quite enough if he moves on without alarm or resistance; probably he will shortly touch the collar, and it is quite as probable that he will recoil from such touch. Some horses, of course, will come to taking a share in the draught of the carriage sooner than others; but be the time longer or shorter, if good-tempered, the utmost caution must be observed to use any means but those of violence to induce him to do this. If he will go, he will draw; it may require some patience to bring this about, but *finis coronat opus*.

We have above supposed we have only had ignorance to contend with in a horse; but there are others where we have sulkiness, wilfulness, or vice as opponents: even in such case patience, artifice, and, as it may be termed, beating a horse at his own game, will usually succeed. Failing these, there is but one course left—we must, figuratively speaking, break him to harness, or break his neck.

I will here venture to obtrude a little bit of opinion—not to say advice—and an observation or two bearing on the subject in hand, and what I have said four or five lines back.

If a horse exhibits such evident aversion or vice when put to harness as to render extreme measures indispensable, would it not be more consistent with good feeling and good judgment not to persevere with him? If, indeed, as in the case of the cart-horse, we can use him for no other purpose than that of draught, draw he must, be the consequences of making him do so what they may; for, if determinedly vicious, we might as well break his neck as leave him a useless incumbrance to the earth. But, with a horse that can be used for other purposes, the wisest plan would be to use him for those, or sell him to some one who would.

I have said a good deal as regards coaxing and patting a horse. Some persons may think, or say, they could produce desired results quicker by other means: let them try. I go on what hundreds of cases have taught me, which is, to never have re-

course to the *fortitur* till the *suaviter* has failed. The effect produced by patting a horse is not the mere encouragement, but it diverts his attention, while many necessary things are being done. If a horse is playfully inclined, while he is thinking of snapping at the man tickling him on the chest or under the arm, he is not thinking of kicking. If a horse will *play*, depend on it in nine cases in ten he will *go*. If he shows himself sensible to caresses, he is mostly inaccessible to vice.

Some horses will, from sulkiness, pertinaciously refuse to move. When we are convinced their conduct arises from such cause, we have but one recourse: get a couple of men to the hind-wheels of the break, speak to the break-horse in terms he will understand, and let him pull the other off, in common phrase, "neck and heels." This will in many, perhaps, cause resistance, more or less; he will perhaps struggle against it—at all events, while so struggling he cannot kick, or at least rarely does so. After a good tugging along with the collar on his neck, he mostly feels it pleasanter to go than to struggle.

Some will lie down and refuse to rise. In a general way, it is a bad plan, in such cases, to release him by undoing the pole-piece and traces; if you do, and he is a determined sulky one, he will lay down again when he thinks proper. Let the break-horse drag him by the collar. If you wish to render the doing so certain, pass a strong rope with a noose (that will not tighten by the draft) round his neck, just beyond his head; fasten this to the pole-hook; let the break move at a very slow walk, so as to give the culprit the opportunity of at least attempting to get on his legs; so soon as he shows inclination to rise, stop the break, and let him be assisted; but let him find the only result of lying down is the being dragged by the neck while in such a situation. I rarely found a horse, however sulky, repeat the manœuvre. Of course, such measures are only to be resorted to in extreme cases.

Running away, or at least attempting to do so, is another exploit sometimes put in practice by horses in being broke to harness. If they take a breaks-man by surprise in single harness this is sometimes

a somewhat serious affair, inasmuch as the probability is he has his driving reins to the cheek of the bit the first time of putting a horse in; but a practised breaksman so watches the movements of a horse under such circumstances, that he checks him before he has time to carry matters to this extremity. In double harness it matters little; the break-horse, aided by the driver, will hold him, and he will soon find that the united efforts of both, to which is added the weight of the break, render the running away a serious exertion, of which he will soon tire. Should he attempt it a second time, skid or tie up one of the hind wheels, and let him run as fast as he pleases or can, and when disposed to relax his efforts, as he has, perhaps, ran half a mile to please himself, make him go another to please the breaksman. This shows him that running away is not to be practised with impunity.

EFFECT OF TREATMENT.

Many persons quote what is, or what they consider to be, the natural state of animals, and hold that out as a guide by which we should shape our treatment of them in a state of domestication. Nothing can be more fallacious than such reasoning and idea. Whether animals are longer or shorter lived in their wild than in a domesticated state I am not prepared to say; for, though we hear of many that survive our treatment of them but a short time, let it be borne in mind that such are usually foreign animals, and change of climate probably brings about the catastrophe much more than the treatment. Be this as it may, let us look at the change art, or rather breeding and treatment, has made in animals of domestic use. To begin with the horse: I believe it

will not be found that the horse of the desert, or those of the prairie of America, exhibit either a body overloaded with flesh or a carcase of distended dimensions. In these particulars they may be styled, to a certain degree, in condition. Nor have those employed to catch them found them deficient in speed, or, to a certain extent, in endurance. They have two circumstances in their favour to render them so—constant exercise, and, from the shortness of the herbage, their stomachs are never distended. Could we supply them with five or six feeds of corn per diem, we should not find a prairie horse far short of the condition of the hunter (I had almost said racehorse); for if, as in summer, the sun has made the growing herbage into all but hay, it is not a very bad succedaneum for it; and provided a horse gets sufficient exercise, it matters little whether he does so of his own accord from habit and circumstances, or whether he does it with an exercise boy on his back. What the wild horse wants is stamina; and this we give the domesticated one by proper feeding. But if what I have said is

correct (and I believe it is), we find the wild horse not differing greatly in point of carcase from one of our own when in condition.

We—that is, art and culture—have produced for our use the great inactive, ponderous, pot-bellied animal we see working in a farmer's team; there neither was nor is a similar animal of the horse kind in nature. But London, though not the paradise of the sportsman, is, after all, the school for improvement in most things; and London men, when using cart horses in their business, now show a very different animal, in point of appearance and alertness, to what was seen fifty years ago in the same employ, and to what may be seen now in that of many farmers.

But we will go further than this, and instance cloven-footed animals. It is true, "unwieldy as an ox," "moving like an ox," and "big as an ox," are terms in common use as applicable to the unwieldy animal we daily see represented by the ox; but let us look at him in his natural form and wild state —we do not find the bison, musk ox, or buffalo with

the enormous carcases and bodies we find in the domestic animal, after being kept in luxuriant pastures, where he is at liberty to fill his stomach daily to repletion. Many foreign oxen are, in their natural state, as light in their carcases as our hunters—they are naturally an active animal, and possess no inconsiderable speed; by this I trust I prove that distended abdomens are not natural to animals.

We perhaps render the ox more in accordance with our ideas of value by rendering him the unwieldy beast we see him; but we have totally destroyed many of those attributes given by nature for his comfort and safety. By our mode of habitual treatment we may possibly give the ox a tendency to carry flesh, and thus enhance his value in the eyes of the butcher; if so, our treatment is right so far as his being an article of food—but as an animal for the farmer's servitude, we spoil him from the day he is weaned.

It has been a disputed point whether the use of horses or oxen is, on the whole, most beneficial

to the farmer. The great objection to the ox is his being slow. How, in the name of common sense, should he be otherwise? So soon as he has left his mother, indeed before, he is turned into long luxuriant pasture, where he distends his bowels *ad libitum*, without having occasion to walk a mile in a day from any cause whatever—his companions, whether cows or oxen, moving at the same pace; and if from necessity compelled to walk a quarter or half a mile home, he and his companions are driven by a boy quite willing to walk as slowly as they wish.

Why, I would make a racing colt all but as slow as an ox, let him be brought up with him and in every particular the same way; while, on the contrary, give me any pair of oxen at six months old, let me feed them as I like, and treat them as I like, I will be bound to produce the pair at three years old ready to trot their ten miles in an hour in harness willingly, and with perfect ease to themselves. Of course the experiment would not be worth making; but it shows my

perfect conviction that it is to the feeding and treatment of the young animal we owe their alertness or the reverse, in after-life. Look, we will say, at a young calf. So long as he gets no more than nature requires—that is, sustenance from the mother—so long as he keeps in shape, we see no exuberance of carcase in him; but from the moment he begins to feed, and is turned into a luxuriant pasture, from that moment he gets more or less out of shape. The racing colt would become just the same if turned into the same pasture.

No more preposterous idea ever entered the mind of man than that of turning hunters out to grass (say) in the middle of May. True hunters do not require the being kept in the same condition during the months of May to the middle of August that they exhibit from the latter period till fox-hunting ends. During the summer months a certain quantity (and that a very small one) of cooling food may with advantage be allowed him as a mild alterative; but the turning him to grass and stopping his oats brought him to the state of the cow or ox. The

master in those days rejoiced to see his hunter as big as a bullock—so fat and inert that stamping at the flies was the only exercise he took; and, moreover, shook his head on seeing another, not so great a glutton, keeping up something like a proper form.

He thought that he had not thriven like his obese favourite, quite forgetting that when brought up to be got into what was then thought condition, the strong doses of physic that were in those days rammed down his throat, and the influence of exercise, would cause all this obesity to melt away in very quick time; and, having little or no corn in him, he had very little stamina to support the treatment to which he was now subjected, so different to that which he had been used to when at grass; and it is not at all improbable that the sparer horse, at whom his master had shaken his head, may, after a month's stabling, show by far in the best condition; and as in those days grooms gave all horses indiscriminately the same quantum of physic and work, whether wanting it or not, supposing my hypothesis to be correct, it

shows the spare horse quite as strong in constitution as the lustier one; and I am quite sure that such would be found, in a general way, to be the case.

THE END.

J. Billing, Printer and Stereotyper, Guildford, Surrey.

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